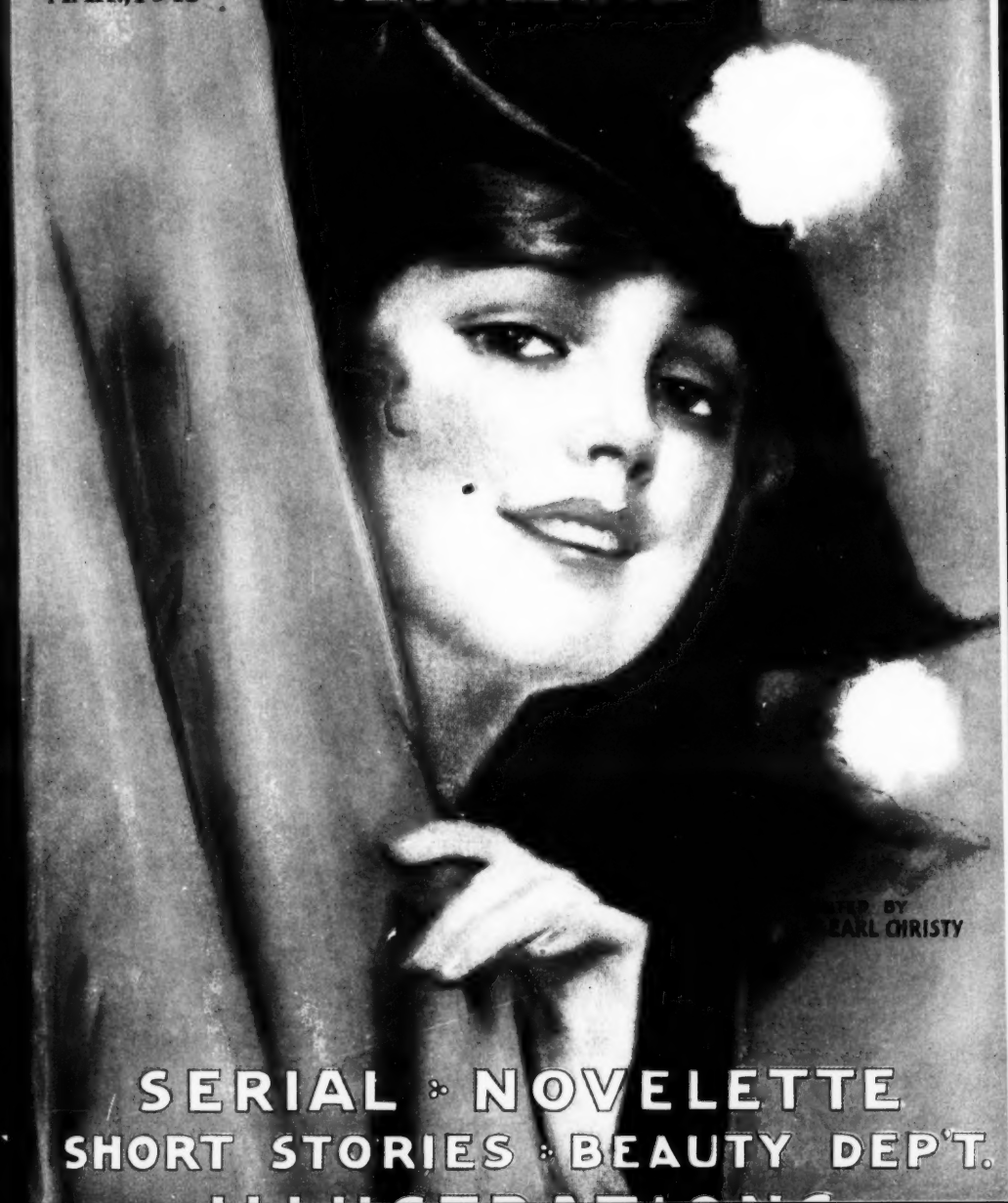


# SMITH'S

MAR., 1917

MAGAZINE

15 CENTS



EDITED BY  
EARL CHRISTY

SERIAL • NOVELETTE  
SHORT STORIES • BEAUTY DEPT.

# MAY EDGINTON

In "The Woman Who Broke the Rule," presented a strong picture of the inevitable consequences to the girl who violates our double-standard code of morality. Is there no violation of the moral code for which a man must equally suffer? A violation that will bring upon him the scorn of men and women, complete ostracism wherever he goes, while the woman involved meets only with pity, or, at the worst, mild ridicule? Read

## "The MAN Who Broke the Rule"

You will find this latest novel of May Edginton's even more significant, even more absorbing, than "The Woman Who Broke the Rule."

Buy the current number of AINSLEE'S.

Now on sale at all news stands.  
Fifteen Cents the copy, the  
February number of

# AINSLEE'S

"The Magazine That Entertains"

*A Splendid  
Story -  
Dues*



**Victor**  
"HIS MASTERS VOICE"  
REG. U.S. PAT. OFF.

**Caruso**  
HOMER  
DESTINN  
MELBA

**Masterpieces of opera  
by the  
world's greatest artists**

The mere mention of opera suggests Caruso, Alda, Braslau, Calvé, Destinn, Farrar, Gadske, Galli-Curci, Garrison, Gluck, Hempel, Homer, Journet, Martinelli, McCormack, Melba, Ruffo, Schumann-Heink, Scotti, Sembrich, Tetrassini, Whitehill—the commanding personalities who dominate the operatic stage.

These renowned artists in full realization and acknowledgment that the Victor alone reproduces their art with absolute fidelity, make records for the Victor exclusively.

Any Victor dealer will gladly play any music you wish to hear, and give you a copy of the Victor Record catalog—the most complete catalog of music in all the world.

**Victor Talking Machine Co.  
Camden, N. J., U. S. A.**

Berliner Gramophone Co., Montreal, Canadian Distributors

**Important Notice.** All Victor Talking Machines are patented and with right of use with Victor Records only. All Victor Records are patented and are only licensed, and with right of use on Victor Talking Machines only. Victor Records and Victor Machines are scientifically co-ordinated and synchronized by our special processes of manufacture; and their use, except with each other, is not only unauthorized, but damaging and unsatisfactory.

# Victor Supremacy

# LOVE SCENES IN SEVEN DEADLY SINS

## The LADIES' WORLD

offers a fascinating series of stories by Florence Morse Kingsley, entitled SEVEN DEADLY SINS. The titles are "Envy", "Pride", "Passion", "Wrath", "Greed", "Sloth", and The Seventh Sin, the title of which will be announced later.



## McCLURE PICTURES

present a series of seven five-reel photo-plays, each play exemplifying one of the SEVEN DEADLY SINS. The first play, "Envy", will be released January 8th. The other plays will immediately follow.



GEORGE LE GUERE as Adam Moore, the lover  
SHIRLEY MASON as Eve Leslie, the beloved



## EVE LESLIE IS BESET BY SEVEN DEADLY SINS

**E**VE LESLIE is young, beautiful, appealing. Wealth, luxury, social success are within her reach. But they have a price!

Adam Moore is a virile young American, struggling to win success—and Eve Leslie.

Eve admires Adam and yet—other men offer her

immediate wealth and social power. She is tempted to take the short and easy road; she does not see the dangers, she does not know that Seven Deadly Sins are waiting to ensnare her.

Will Adam's love conquer at last?

Will Adam triumph with his sweetheart over the insidious forces arrayed against them? These questions will absorb your interest if you follow Florence Morse Kingsley's great series through The Ladies' World.

Seven Deadly Sins is now on the screen. Your enjoyment of this series of seven five-

reel photoplays—each play exemplifying one of the Seven Deadly Sins—will be trebled if you first become familiar with its characters and their romantic adventures in The Ladies' World, the McClure magazine for women—just 10 cents at the nearest newsstand.

These great stars will act the story for the films



Ann Murdock Holbrook Blinn Nance O'Neill Charlotte Walker H. B. Warner

## THE LADIES' WORLD

Read the story in The Ladies' World  
See the films in your favorite theatre

## Free!

Shirley Mason's Surprise Package!  
Write in margin your name and address and name and street of theatre in which you desire to see Seven Deadly Sins. Tear off and mail to Motion Picture Editor, The Ladies' World, 251 4th Ave., New York. A surprise package from the youngest and prettiest star of the films will be sent to you FREE.



Vol. XXIV

# SMITH'S MAGAZINE

No. 6

A PUBLICATION FOR THE HOME

## CONTENTS

FOR - MARCH - 1917

Cover Design . . . . .	F. Earle Christy	
<b>The Trail-Taker</b> —A Novelette . . . . .	Bonnie R. Ginger	851
Illustrated by Robert A. Graef.		
<b>Living up to Fuzzy</b> —A Story . . . . .	Burges Johnson	895
Illustrated by R. Van Buren.		
<b>The "Light of Other Days"</b> —at Vassar . . . . .		903
<b>Whiter Than Snow</b> —A Story . . . . .	Mary Eleanor Roberts	904
Illustrated by E. A. Furman.		
<b>"Riley Country"</b> —Verse . . . . .	Jeannie Pendleton Hall	908
<b>The Girl Who Didn't Care for Women</b> —	Margarita Spalding Gerry	909
A Story		
Illustrated by E. C. Caswell.		
<b>The Tyranny of Clothes</b> — . . . . .	Hildegarde Lavender	922
• A Tea-Table Discussion.		
Illustrated by Laura E. Foster.		
<b>A Squirrel in the Park</b> —Verse . . . . .	Rheem Douglas	928
<b>Love and a Maid</b> —A Story . . . . .	Marianne Gauss	929
Illustrated by Clarence Rowe.		
<b>The Titrivor</b> —A Cap'n Sproul Story . . . . .	Holman F. Day	937
Illustrated by Victor Perard.		
<b>Out of the Blue</b> —A Story . . . . .	Lee Pape	953
Illustrated by Albert Hencke.		
<b>Light o' Hame</b> —Verse . . . . .	Gertrude Mercia Wheelock	960
<b>Stay-at-Home Culture</b> — . . . . .	D. E. Wheeler	961
Making Your Own Encyclopedia.		
<b>February Passes</b> —Verse . . . . .	Jeannie Pendleton Hall	965
<b>The Poetry Party</b> — . . . . .	Mary Patterson	966
More Pages from Anne's Diary.		
Illustrated by Laura E. Foster.		
<b>The Lady of Rocca Pirenza</b> —Serial . . . . .	Anne O'Hagan	973
Illustrated by Edmund Frederick.		
<b>Facial Massage and Wrinkles</b> . . . . .	Doctor Lillian Whitney	1009
Illustrated with Photographs.		

YEARLY SUBSCRIPTION \$1.90

SINGLE COPIES 15 CENTS

Monthly publication issued by SMITH PUBLISHING HOUSE, 79 89 Seventh Avenue, New York City.  
 ORMOND G. SMITH, President, 79 Seventh Avenue, New York City; GEORGE C. SMITH, Secretary and Treasurer, 79  
 Seventh Avenue, New York City. Copyright, 1917, by SMITH PUBLISHING HOUSE, in the United States and Great  
 Britain. All Rights Reserved. Publishers everywhere are cautioned against using any of the contents of this  
 magazine either wholly or in part. Entered as Second class Matter, at the New York Post Office, according to an  
 Act of Congress, March 3, 1879, by SMITH PUBLISHING HOUSE. Canadian subscription, \$2.00. Foreign, \$2.50.  
 WARNING: Do not subscribe through agents unknown to you. Complaints are daily made by persons thus victimized.  
 IMPORTANT: Authors, agents and publishers are requested to note that this firm does not hold itself responsible for loss of unsolicited  
 manuscripts while at this office or in transit, and that it cannot undertake to hold uncalled for manuscripts for a longer period than six  
 months. If the return of manuscript is expected, postage should be inclosed.

# City Physicians Explain Why They Prescribe Nuxated Iron to Make Beautiful, Healthy Women and Strong, Vigorous Men

NOW BEING USED BY OVER THREE MILLION PEOPLE ANNUALLY

Quickly transforms the flabby flesh, toneless tissues, and pallid cheeks of weak, anaemic men and women into a perfect glow of health and beauty—Often increases the strength of delicate, nervous, run-down folks 200 per cent in two weeks' time.

It is conservatively estimated that over three million people annually in this country alone are taking Nuxated Iron. Such astonishing results have been reported from its use both by doctors and laymen, that a number of physicians in various parts of the country have been asked to explain why they prescribe it so extensively, and why it apparently produces so much better results than were obtained from the old forms of inorganic iron.

Extracts from some of the letters received are given below:

Dr. King, a New York physician and author, says: "There can be no vigorous iron men without iron."

Pallor means anaemia.

Anaemia means iron deficiency. The skin of anaemic men and women is pale. The flesh flabby. The muscles lack tone, the brain fags and the memory fails and they often become weak, nervous, irritable, despondent and melancholy. When the iron goes from the blood of women, the roses go from their cheeks. In the most common foods of America, the starches, sugars, table syrups, candies, polished rice, white bread, soda crackers, biscuits, macaroni, spaghetti, tapioca, sago, farina, degenerated cornmeal, no longer is iron to be found. Refining processes have removed the iron of Mother Earth from these impoverished foods, and silly methods of home cookery, by throwing down the waste-pipe the water in which our vegetables are cooked is responsible for another grave iron loss.

Therefore, if you wish to preserve your youthful vim and vigor to a ripe old age, you must supply the iron deficiency in your food by using some form of organic iron, just as you would use salt when your food has not enough salt.

Dr. Sauer, a Boston physician who has studied both in this country and in great European Medical Institutions says: "As I have said a hundred times over, organic iron is the greatest of all strength builders. If people would only throw away patent medicines and nauseous concoctions and take Nuxated Iron, I am convinced that the lives of thousands of persons might be saved, who now die every year from pneumonia, grippe, consumption, kidney, liver and heart troubles, etc. The real and true cause which started their diseases was nothing more nor less than a weakened condition brought on by lack of iron in the blood."

Not long ago a man came to me who was nearly half a century old and asked me to give him a preliminary examination for life insurance. I was astonished to find him with a blood pressure of a boy of 20 and as full of vigor, vim and vitality as a young man; in fact, a young man he really was notwithstanding his age. The secret, he said, was taking iron—nux-

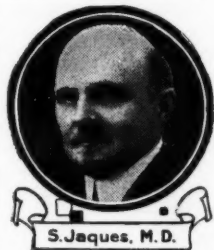
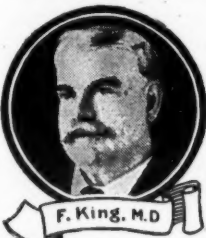
ated iron had filled him with renewed life. At 30 he was in bad health; at 46 he was careworn and nearly all in—now at 56, after taking nuxated iron a miracle of vitality and his face beaming with the buoyancy of youth.

Iron is absolutely necessary to enable your blood to change food into living tissue. Without it, no matter how much or what you eat, your food merely passes through you without doing you any good. You don't get the strength out of it, and as a consequence you become weak, pale and sickly-looking, just like a plant trying to grow in a soil deficient in iron.

If you are not strong or well you owe it to yourself to make the following test: See how long you can work or how far you can walk without becoming tired. Next take two five-grain tablets of ordinary nuxated iron three times per day after meals for two weeks. Then test your strength again and see how much you have gained. I have seen dozens of nervous, run-down people who were ailing all the while double their strength and endurance and entirely rid themselves of all symptoms of dyspepsia, liver and other troubles in from ten to fourteen days' time, simply by taking iron in the proper form. And this, after they had in some cases been doctoring for months without obtaining any benefit. But don't take the old forms of reduced iron, iron acetate, or tincture of iron simply to save a few cents. The iron demanded by Mother Nature for the red coloring matter in the blood of her children is, alas! not that kind of iron. You must take iron in a form that can be easily absorbed and assimilated to do you any good, otherwise it may prove worse than useless. Many an athlete and prize-fighter has won the day simply because he knew the secret of great strength and endurance and filled his blood with iron before he went into the affray; while many another has gone down in inglorious defeat simply for the lack of iron."

Dr. Schuyler C. Jaques, visiting surgeon, St. Elizabeth's Hospital, New York City, said: "I have never before given out any medical information or advice for publication, as I ordinarily do not believe in it. But in the case of Nuxated Iron I feel I would be remiss in my duty not to mention it. I have taken it myself and given it to my patients with most surprising and satisfactory results. And those who wish quickly to increase their strength, power and endurance will find it a most remarkable and wonderfully effective remedy."

NOTE—Nuxated Iron is not a patent medicine nor secret remedy, but one which is well known to druggists and whose iron constituents is widely prescribed by eminent physicians everywhere. Unlike the older inorganic iron products, it is easily assimilated, does not injure the teeth, make them black, nor upset the stomach; on the contrary, it is a most potent remedy, in nearly all forms of indigestion, as well as for nervous run-down conditions. The manufacturers have such great confidence in Nuxated Iron that they offer to forfeit \$100.00 to any charitable institution if they cannot take any man or woman under 60 who lacks iron and increase their strength 200 per cent, or over in four weeks' time provided they have no serious organic trouble. They also offer to refund your money if it does not at least double your strength and endurance in ten days' time. It is dispensed by all good druggists.



Please mention this magazine when answering advertisements

# SMITH'S MAGAZINE

Volume 24

MARCH, 1917

Number 6

## The Trail-Taker

By Bonnie R. Ginger

Author of "They Don't Know," "About One Out of Four," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY ROBERT A. GRAEF

Barry Oliver was the sort of girl that other girls admire. And yet, capable as she was, she managed the affairs of her heart none too well. At any rate, she blazed her own trail.

### CHAPTER I.

IT was one of those things you don't believe in unless you see them.

That is, it was a quiet block in downtown New York, in the part called Chelsea. On one side of it was an aged theological seminary, quaint and green-campused, just asprout at this time with its spring ivy, and on the other, there were at least two small apartment houses and several boarding and rooming houses and an employment agency and a day nursery, besides just dwellings. There was, too, the Working Girls' Club, the home of some three dozen assorted young women whose chief distraction was self-support.

On the Sunday morning on which this story opens, two young men were walking slowly up and down the long sidewalk outside the theological iron railing.

One was tall and dark and aquiline. He was really very good looking, though rather rigid. His nose, however, was restive and warlike. Projecting ahead of his other features, it

had the air of straining at the leash, of saying, "Come on!" in eager urgency for adventures into which its more calculating owner had no mind to follow it. He, indeed, was not a person to fly hither and yon at the bidding of an impulse. On the contrary, it was his pride that he kept his impulses under strict control, so that it had never been said of Pitt Jepson—that was his name—that he followed his nose.

Mallory Crothers, the other man, was a loose-limbed, carelessly dressed young fellow, of whom the first impression was that he had reddish hair, a keen face, and abounding energy.

"The trouble with you is, you're a nag," he was saying.

"A nag? I a nag? What do you mean?"

"You nag yourself. You nag your nature. You're a misplaced Pilgrim Father. You landed on Plymouth Rock, and you've never moved off it yet. From it you harangue Nature. You think she's a bad woman, and you'd like to put her out of business. You'd particularly like it just at this

season, when she's at your sleeve, tempting you. Oh, I know you, Pitt, old fellow!"

Pitt tried to look indulgent, though inwardly he stiffened.

"Run on, Mallory, till you feel better. It always seems to do you good to rail at me."

"But it doesn't seem to help you any. Why don't you wake up to life? Pitt, there are three ways of taking this affair called living—dissipation, repression, and sublimation. Yours is repression. But I'll illustrate. Look up there."

Pitt followed his gaze. In the second-story window of the house opposite something revolved slowly, dimly, white lacy, pink ribbony. It had bare arms. Pitt flushed, reared back, and turned away.

"Shame, Mal! The girl doesn't know she can be seen."

"Maybe. But we've seen her. Nice arms, too, and new lingerie——"

"Mallory!"

"There, you see! Repression. What is lingerie? A girl's reward for five and a half days of work, with half a day to buy it in and all Sunday to try it on. There's a whole treatise there on Woman in Vocations, but you see only the bare arms, and turn away like a startled gazelle, and the pleasurable feeling induced by nice arms and clean new lingerie you put down with a hobnailed heel."

Pitt turned testily. But the reply he was formulating was not voiced. At that moment both he and Mallory were distracted by the appearance on the steps of that same house opposite of a tall, lithe girl, black-haired, hatless, who stood an instant looking about her, upstreet, downstreet, and lastly across the way.

Even at that distance, something about her suggested energy, even as it proclaimed grace. A dancer might have poised like that. If she had taken

flight from the steps like an *aéroplane*, it would not have been surprising. But as it was, she walked down and started diagonally upstreet. And she saw the two young men who were so patently watching her.

A taxi bore down on her, and she dodged it, at the same time sending the young men a glance, brilliant and dynamic, a challenge that was also a greeting. Gaining the sidewalk, she went on up the street like an arpeggio of victorious music.

The young men walked on down to the foot of the seminary fence and turned and came back. Mallory had ceased to rail, and Pitt had waived his self-defense. They knew that the girl had only gone to the letter box, for they had seen the letters in her hand. In fact, she was now returning to the Working Girls' Club.

Just then a big limousine glided down the street. Pitt exclaimed:

"There's Cousin Loreda!"

Miss Loreda Jepson often came to take him to church. She was a lady much interested in uplift work; so when the limousine halted and Miss Loreda herself hung out of it and called to the black-haired girl, Pitt understood at once. His cousin had that winter been giving a course of art talks to workers, and the Working Girls' Club had been one of her victims.

They saw the black-haired girl wheel and stop. Miss Loreda engaged her in conversation. Mallory Crothers quickened his step.

"Let's cross over," he said, and did so, Pitt following aloofly. They reached the limousine.

"Well, Pitt! Good morning, Mr. Crothers. Miss Olliver, my cousin, Mr. Jepson—and Mr. Crothers." Miss Loreda was beaming. One could see that this Olliver girl was one of her prize captives. "Miss Olliver is a neighbor of yours, Pitt."

The neighbor held out her hand. It



was a large, splendid hand, with a quality of soft firmness, and it had another quality, too, for Pitt let go of it suddenly and averted his gaze. But Mallory held it.

"How taxicab drivers must hate you!" he said.

The girl remembered dodging the taxi and laughed.

"It's fun to give them a jolt," she said, and then, to Mallory's surprise, she turned to Pitt and added: "Isn't it, Mr. Jepson?"

"What?" He looked both pleased and embarrassed.

"It was you who saved that little kid from under the motor truck the other morning," said the girl. "It was a magnificent piece of work. I'd like to thank you, for that kid is a particular friend of mine."

"Did you save a child from being killed?" cried Cousin Loreda eagerly.

Pitt flushed.

"He certainly did, Miss Jepson. I saw it, because I generally look out of the window to wave to Johnny when his mother takes him to the nursery. If he'd been killed, it would have been my fault, for he'd scooted ahead of his mother just to wave up at me, and that was when the truck came. And Mr. Jepson saved him. It was the quickest, neatest job!"

While Pitt was floundering through self-conscious disclaimings, Mallory was thinking:

"Confound his luck! So that's why she looked at us so greetingly."



Even at that distance, something about her suggested energy, even as it proclaimed grace. A dancer might have poised like that.

The girl was leaving them. In fact, it was high time for Pitt and his cousin to be on their way to church. But Miss Jepson had a parting word for her working girl.

"Then you'll attend the lecture this afternoon, Miss Olliver?"

"Oh, yes, Miss Jepson."

"Thank you. I know I can depend



on you." And then Cousin Loreda made way for Pitt beside her. "Won't you come with us to church, Mr. Crothers?"

"Thanks, I can't. Got an engagement," he invented.

But Cousin Loreda had another invitation, an inspirational one.

"Well, then, can't you and Pitt come to the lecture this afternoon, at the Girls' Club, here? Pitt, you've said you'd come, and this is the last."

"Yes, indeed, Miss Jepson!" cried Mallory. "We'll particularly like to come, won't we, Pitt?" And as Pitt stammered, Mallory added, "And thank you. It's very kind of you, Miss Jepson, I'm sure!"

The limousine glided away. Mallory stood and watched the girl, who was just going up the steps of the club. She turned at the top and saw him.

They made no motion with their hands, but their glances waved. Then she was gone.

## CHAPTER II.

In the second-floor-front room of the club, Marcie Folsom had interrupted for the moment her lingerie orgy and was arranging about her mirror a set of snapshots, singing as she did so.

On the cot in the alcove May Dune sat in pajamas, combing her long hair. An expression of deep mournfulness sat comically in her sleepy eyes. May Dune was the youngest girl in the house, and the most reckless.

"Did you hear me come in last night, Marcie?"

"Two g. m.," singsonged Marcie. "In my a-re-o-plane, away, away! You'll get caught."

"I have to tell, anyhow."

"Why? No one needs to know."

"I promised Mrs. Dorming I'd always tell."

"Oh. Your funeral, then."

"The trouble, Marcie, is that I always think I won't bat again. 'Nev-ver

again,' I say to myself every time, and then out I goes and does it right over. Now, if I was only like Barry!"

"That girl's as strong as a horse," said Marcie.

"Lots of us are strong, but what good does it do us? We fool away our time, or dissipate like me, or get lingerie bugs like you. And then we wonder why Barry Olliver is more interesting than we are! She's just a girl like the rest of us, just a stenographer, with our hours for work. It's the way she goes at things. Look at her in the mornings, for instance, dressing. You'd think dressing to go to work in an office all day was just a jubilee. Look at her at breakfast. Is she ever too sleepy to talk and jolly us, no matter how late she was out the night before? Yes, and read the paper. Barry uses her *brain*. And tell me what other girl'd walk—*walk*, Marcie!—from here to Maiden Lane?"

May Dune was notorious in the house for her adoration of Barry Olliver, and Marcie, rooming with both, had sometimes an overdose of that worship.

"She's a horse, I tell you, May."

"Horse yourself! You lazy ones always say that, when you see a girl making more of herself than you do. No, it's because she wants to live a full life. That's why she swims. You'd ought to have seen her at the pool last night. Every one was watching her dive. Then her sewing class, and singing lessons, and the cooking class! I wish I had the get-up to be just one speck like her."

The second-floor quietude was disturbed by the sudden loud clang of the floor bell, usually a signal for some one to go down to the phone. Five girls at once clustered over the banister, while a voice from downstairs belated:

"Oh, Miss Olliver! Miss Olliver! Where's Miss Olliver?"

"Out!" yelled May Dune. "Who's it callin'?"

"No, she's here—just coming in," said the downstairs voice.

"I expect that's Mr. Amber," suggested May. "He'll want her to go riding on Long Island, I bet."

Marcie departed uninterestedly to the bathroom, and soon thereafter Barry Olliver came to the second-floor front.

"Oh, you're back," grinned May. "Was it Mr. Amber?"

"Yes."

"Long Island?"

"Un-huh."

"Going?"

"After the lecture—yes."

Barry Olliver baffled her sisters in industry here at the club. "It's her constitution," they said. "You can't tire her." And it did seem as if she had some energy that surpassed the ordinary sorts. May Dune had hardly touched the list of the girl's activities. And yet, more than the sum of her comings and goings and doings, were still the ease and grace of them, so that they seemed, as it were, instinctive, inevitable.

There was a sort of spontaneity about everything she did. It showed itself even in her walk, which with her was distinctive because a gymnasium instructor had once explained to her the science of her own anatomy and muscles, and with her quick insight she had taken the lesson home and had made mere ordinary pedestrianism an art. There was much of the artist in Barry Olliver.

But was there also something more than art or strength or even instinct? Sometimes in the girl there was the keen zest that comes only when one consciously plays a sharp game with a skilled antagonist, whom one must beat by outclassing and outwitting, and because one has staked one's pride and one's life policy on the victory.

She was a working girl. A working

girl does not go as far as she had without pride and a policy.

### CHAPTER III.

Miss Loreda Jepson had never been meant for a lecturer. Her art talks to women workers had called forth a steadily dwindling audience at the Working Girls' Club, until this afternoon, when the fact that it was the final lecture and would be followed by the monthly tea pouring mitigated its undesirableness and brought forth a quite respectable attendance.

But not attentiveness. Miss Jepson would have needed gifts indeed to compete with the attractions of the two male guests she had brought with her, who now sat on either side of her, and at whom, across the carpet as across a battle ground, some fifteen or so working girls fired rounds of glances with telling effect—some bluntly curious, some flirtatiously friendly, some calmly and openly critical.

One of the young men, the dark one, had felt the undefendedness of his position and had retreated to his trenches—that is, to an appearance of intent interest in the lecture. The other had rallied to the new and stimulating peril and had gradually exposed himself to the fire of glances, even signaling to half a dozen pairs of bright eyes, "All right. Just wait till this talk's over, will you?"

Presently May Dune leaned over to Maggie Coates, whispering:

"Say, who *are* the gents, Mag?"

"Ask not me. Aren't they the mercerized lisle, though?"

"Mercerized nothing! Pure silk thread, they are. And isn't the dark one a dream?"

"Then why're you flirting with the other one?"

"Me? Flirting?" May stifled a giggle; then turned to the girl behind her.

"Barry—who are they? Why'd they come? What's the answer?"

Barry looked at the child a moment, and then leaned slowly toward her.

"One of them's Miss Jepson's cousin. Mrs. Dorming told me he's a writer, and he's just come into our block to live because it's quiet."

"Which one's the writer?"

Barry settled back in her chair without answering.

"What's the answer?" she repeated May's question to herself. She recalled the moment when the two "pure-silk-thread" guests had come in. She had seen how the flush of one of them had confessed, and how the greetingly hopeful stare of the other had proclaimed, that she had had some share in their being here. But that wasn't all of the reason. Well, one of them was a writer. Possibly the other was, too. What did they write? Stories? In that case—

It was not like her to attend a lecture and then neglect to listen. But she had never before met a writer, and the new experience superseded art. There he sat, "pure-silk thread" indeed, from his dark hair to his faultless shoes, blue-blooded, indubitably anastored. He was New England, of course. One could almost see the family portraits of his forbears in some stately colonial home. She remembered the morning when he had rescued the child from under the motor truck. He interested her; that is, he attracted and antagonized her. She hated Puritans, but she loved bravery and she admired intellect. She had often wondered, passionately curious and baffled, how people really wrote. Writing was one of the few things she had never had the feeling that she might be able to do. She felt like two Barrys—one wanted to admire this exponent of an unattainable profession; the other unaccountably wished to disparage him, to call him a prig.

The lecture came to a close, and every one reacted at once; the atmosphere was instantly sprightly. There were introductions and teacup clinkings and all the little assorted amenities that go with small sandwiches and plates of lemon wafers.

Barry poured tea, and Mallory Crothers managed to get to the table and to take a cup from her hand.

"This is what I came for," he said. "Tea?"

"No. To get to know you. At least, to get started."

She laughed. He was easy to classify—a nice, jolly fellow, not serious about anything, a good mixer, no snob. There were thousands of chaps like him; he was like the circus—if you've seen one, you've seen all.

"Tell me," said Barry, "what your friend Mr. Jepson writes?"

"Writes? Oh, yes. Essays. Solemn things, not at all like rescuing kids from under trucks."

She looked over at the writer. He was being very polite to Mrs. Dorming, bending down to her in a nice, listening way. But his glance met Barry's.

"Oh, May, have you met Mr. Crothers?"

May had, in fact, followed her prey to the table. Here she definitely captured him and bore him off, though he comically signaled to the girl pouring tea, "I don't want to go, you know—it's compulsion."

"Essays," thought Barry. "Then he *isn't* here to study working girls. He's mostly avoiding the girls. I suppose he's a prig. Why on earth do I wonder one way or another about him?"

But she kept on studying him. She was that way about new things. As long as a thing baffled her, she kept at it.

Presently Miss Jepson took her departure, but her cousin and his friend remained. The girls gathered about the piano and sang their regular stock of

song hits, with their own Maggie Coates at the ivories to give the proper lilt. Every one joined in. The parlor rang. All at once Maggie struck into a dance tune. Every one got up. Three couples began twirling down the stately room.

"Yes, let's dance!" shouted May Dune, and looked at her captive. "Do you know that one?" she asked.

"Yes. Shall we try?"

But before they began, Mallory slipped over to Pitt Jepson and whispered:

"Pitt, for Heaven's sake, don't look shocked! Sunday dancing goes against your upbringing, but face it out—or else go away. Don't be a kill-joy." And he got back to May Dune and seized her and went circling giddily with her in an intricate gymnastic maze.

Pitt Jepson stood rigid by the tea table, which had been shoved against the wall. Mallory's parenthetical charge upon him had smitten him moveless. Thus did Barry Olliver see him, a sort of statue, his fine, outstanding nose jutting toward the revelry.

"Don't you dance?" she asked.

He turned to her. She herself was suddenly transformed. Her eyes and half-opened mouth spoke of excitement, impatience. He was not intuitive, but he felt the peril of that moment as she stood there, ready to judge him by his answer. With all the intensity of his repressed nature, he wanted to look well in the eyes of this radiant, magnetic creature. He didn't know why, or care.

"I don't know these steps, but if you think I could pick them up——"

He got his reward. She threw back her head and looked at him from lowered eyelids, and she smiled.

"Just watch a bit first," she said.

A few minutes later Pitt was learning the steps from her. And Mallory Crothers, snared by the too-adept May, was avowing defeat and all the green-

eyed pangs with the unabashed glances he sent after her, and she was laughing at him over Pitt's shoulder.

"What's magnificent?" asked May, who had caught the adjective out of Mallory's ejaculation.

He smiled oddly.

"You are, sparrow," he lied.

"No, you didn't mean me. You meant Barry Olliver."

"Oh, well, her, too, if you like."

He spiraled the girl giddily. She laughed.

"Why do you call me 'sparrow'?"

"I don't know. Don't you like it?"

"Oh, I don't mind. You might as well call me a sparrow—but they generally call me a lark."

He laughed again. Maggie Coates played faster and faster.

It was all over—lecture and tea pouring and dance—and Sunday supper had been called in the basement. Barry had gone upstairs to get ready for the ride with Mr. Amber, and May had followed her, full of the new adventure.

"But, Barry, what about it? Why did they ask to call?"

"I don't know, May. Because they wanted to, I guess."

"But why did they want? It's funny. No, it isn't, either. You made a hit, the way you always do."

"They're calling on you, too. Mr. Crothers is."

"Oh, that's because I told him you and I were friends. He thought he had to. He is all to the merry, though. But you liked the other one best, didn't you?"

"Did I?"

"Ah, now—what's the use? Haven't I got two eyes in my head? That's why I can't make out why you acted so queer with him at first."

"I acted queer? What do you mean?"

"H'm! You know. You know how you kept studying him, and watching



A few minutes later Pitt was learning the steps from her. And Mallory Crothers, snared by the too-adept May, was avowing defeat.

him suspiciouslike—and then all of a sudden— Well, if you were a girl that flirted, I'd say you flirted with him."

Barry put on her coat, for just then there was the sound of a car in the street below. All at once, she turned.

"May, you're right! I'll own up. But how did you guess? I mean about the being suspicious. Yes, I was, and it was mean and cheap of me, May. I did suspect him—of coming here to study a new type of girl, watching the working girl in her habitat, you know.

He's a writer, and I— And then I watched him to see if he wasn't a snob, because he's so blue-blooded—all those Jepsons are. And then I thought maybe he was an intellectual snob if he wasn't the other sort, and I thought he'd sneer at our musical-comedy racket and all that. And then I knew he goes to church—I saw him go with his cousin this morning—so I thought he'd be shocked when we danced. He wasn't a prig—he was nice. And I'm flattered and glad he wants to call, and I'm ashamed of my cheap suspicions."

And, the better for her confession, she patted May and ran downstairs.

From the window sill, May watched the great automobile glide its swift, luring way up the street.

"She told 'em to come Thursday night. Now, Thursday's her singing night. Singing lesson costs her three dollars, whether she takes it or cuts. The other nights this week she's promised people. She won't break promises, but she'll lose three bucks. Think of a man being worth a day's wage to you—if he is a writer!"

#### CHAPTER IV.

Pitt had invited Mallory to supper with him, and besides Mallory he had asked a Ned Sammitt, a coworker of Mallory's in a scheme for helping poor boys. Just now they were interested in a project for buying land in the country and setting up a farm colony, and Ned was full of it, which was lucky, for the other two were inclined to preoccupation. But presently Mallory, at least, threw off his unaccustomed abstraction, and plunged into the matter in hand.

"This land, Pitt," he explained, "is what I've told you about for our kids. You remember. It's called the Mount Royal estate——"

"And," put in Ned, "we'd have it by now, too, but the thing's balled up on us because one of the executors is trying to sell it on the side to a New York man who wants to build a summer home on it. This man——"

"Is overbidding us," interrupted Mallory. "He's a rich gink—Lee J. Amber, of the Amber Company, Incorporated."

"Nephew to the big Amber," explained Ned. "Mal's met him, haven't you, Mal?"

"Oh, just once or twice. He wouldn't remember me, I suppose. I used to visit Tom Rankin up in Worcester, and this Lee Amber married Tom's sister

Bessie. He hadn't married her then; he used to come up to see her. Oh, he's the sort who gets what he sets out to get. We've haggled about this land. He knows what we want it for, but he doesn't care."

"Mount Royal—isn't that up near your uncle's place, Mallory?" asked Pitt.

"Yes, Uncle Elihu's land adjoins it."

"He wouldn't help you out any?"

"You know very well how much Uncle Elihu would do for me! A lot of use going to him!"

"He's still sore at you?"

Mallory laughed and lit his pipe.

"Sore!"

He enjoyed the notion. His uncle was a mill owner who had no son and who had looked to Mallory to carry on his work. When Mallory had refused, the old gentleman had cut him out of his will, and so Mallory had lost an inheritance. It didn't seem to bother him.

Ned Sammitt had an appointment, and went off to it. Mallory had an appointment, and jilted it. He sat up in Pitt's rooms smoking, while Pitt wrote, or appeared to write, near by.

"Well, how did you like our little flurry this afternoon, Pitt?" he broke in presently. "How did it feel to be alive?"

"Mal," said Pitt, "I've had enough of that line of humor. The idea that I'm a fossil of some sort in time loses its novelty for me. I don't know about you."

"You didn't act like a fossil this afternoon. It was the contrast I noticed. She's a ripping wonder, that girl, isn't she?"

"What girl? You were being pretty attentive to about a dozen."

"I mean the one you were attentive to. I thought I heard you telling her about the Peterborough Pageant. God knows what other wild oats you bragged about!"



Pitt threw down his pen.  
 "See here!" he said testily.

Mallory waved his pipe.

"Oh, and she believed it all! Because she thinks you're a hero. She saw you rescue a kid, and she's got you festooned with laurels—and it's your darned luck and your fatal beauty. A girl like that!"

He did not see Pitt flush. He was getting his coat. A little later he was walking home, and finding out that his mood was not all chaff.

"I advised him to turn himself loose, and he did it! And he roped in that girl. Why, she didn't even see *me*! I know what she thought of me—that I was just one of these nice, likable, useful fellows that carry on with girls and don't do any real harm. So she put in her time on *him*, that kid-rescuing hero! It doesn't seem possible that girl could be taken in, that reliant creature, who must have known hundreds of men. And it was me, me, who told him to wake up and chuck the Pilgrim business!"

So he growled until he got home. Then he read through a set of reviews and some economics reports and made a lot of notes, for he was busier than most people knew. And then he occupied himself in a matter of which nobody knew anything. He wrote a poem.

It was short, but it pleased him, for, having stared at it critically, he put it away in a drawer of his desk and whistled as he began to undress.

He was just turning out the light when there flashed before him the tea table of the Working Girls' Club, and a girl behind it pouring tea.

With his hand outstretched to push the button, he stood still for several seconds. Then he pushed the button and got into bed.

"It's all right," he decided. "On Thursday Pitt'll ball things up with her. The Pilgrim Father will scoot out into

the open, and she'll be bored and sore, and then—and then——"

#### CHAPTER V.

May Dune would have invested glamorously a long ride ending in a supper out of town with a man rich, in love, and attractive. But Barry pretty well knew the sort of temptations that had become incidental to these expeditions lately.

The supper to-night would be just a setting for him while he urged his case. He was leaving town shortly for a couple of weeks or so, and on his return he was to take a longer journey, to the Pacific coast. She knew the plea he would make to-night, and how determined he would be. It was a plea to which nine girls out of ten in her place, or in almost any place, would listen. Well, the chances were that *she* would listen.

And this, in fact, when dessert was reached, she had been doing for an hour and more.

"Barry, you haven't given me much, have you? Not such a heap I can brag about it, anyhow. Now see here, don't you think I've been pretty patient? I've taken crumbs and been grateful, but just the same, I guess you've not sized me up for a man who'll stay in the crumb stage. And if you have, girlie, you're wrong. I'm out for real food now.

"You get me, don't you, Barry? Yes, food, man's food. You've kept me at arm's length, but see here, do you know what I'm going to do? I'm going to take that pretty arm and bend it back, strong as it is—back and back till I come close, clean up to you, Barry, and then—— You know, don't you, what I want to hear then?"

Across the table the girl looked at him, enough afraid of him to let him keep in his the hand he had taken, enough not afraid even to set her other hand on his.



Lee Amber was a dominant man, a man who ordinarily looked at obstacles greetingly, because of his confidence about overcoming them. In a big, physical way he was handsome. Indomitable energy was spelled loud all over him, and the self-reliance of a man who has piled with his own hands the height he stands on, which is a self-reliance very different from that of the man who was born on top of the heap. His color, his eyes, indicated superb health. In his tie and scarfpin one might see little touches of an individuality just too strong to knuckle to the flawless taste that his tailor had otherwise dictated.

He laughed suddenly. It was a persuasive laugh, with something eager in it and something pathetically pleading.

"How you hold off, don't you? You did it when you refused my invitations and turned down the raise in your salary and sent back the presents. Not but that it was all right *then*, and I like you for it. God, it seems like anything you do just makes me like you! But I'm telling you the time's come for something else. Do you get me?"

"Yes, Lee."

"Yes—but you mean you don't care, do you?"

"No. No, Lee, I don't mean that."

"Well, then, what's wrong? It's mighty funny." He said it with a sort of sarcastic pathos. "I get what I want outside of this one thing—money, success, friends, my name in the papers even, lately—everything but this one little girl, here, who says she likes me, but don't marry me. And why? She says there's no one else. Then why? I'm young enough, surely—only thirty-seven—and I've got brains and money and appreciation—yes, I can *appreciate* you, Barry! You've had admirers, I know, but just tell me this—have any of 'em ever *appreciated* you the way I do?"

"You've encouraged me, Lee, when

it wasn't flattery, and I knew it wasn't. And," she said, with a sigh, "I know the difference."

"Well, you knew because you knew I understood. Yes, I understand you, girl. I know how it's been for you—how you've come up the pike by your own efforts, just like I did. Barry, you and I, we're both self-made. That's why I appreciate you. I know how hard it is, and it's harder still for a girl. Most girls stop trying. They just get along with making their mere living—or they don't care. Maybe some care—I know that, too—but they're not husky enough, or something. But you did get on. It's your kind I feel like helping out, like giving things to, because they deserve it. The lazy, pretty ones, they work a little while and have fun and figure out what man'll support 'em in nice, fat idleness the rest of their lives. I've had 'em in my office by the dozens—little slick, pretty ones, pulling down twelve or fifteen per, dressing like chorus girls and promenading Nassau and Wall and Broadway. But when I saw *you*, Barry, I knew it was what I'd been dreaming of all my life."

The girl sat silent, but her hands made ceaseless little movements with the tablecloth.

"Lee," she said at last, "don't you see what I think of? It's only three years since you felt this way about another woman. Yes, you say that was a mistake, but how about this, too?"

"I didn't feel this way. No one ever brought out in me the things I've been telling you."

"She loved you."

"I doubt it."

"Well, even now—how do you know?"

"She asked for the divorce. I didn't."

"You told me, I know."

There was a silence. He leaned toward her, suddenly dominant again.

"I see what you need. You're going to say you need more time yet to think it over. Well, all right—till I get back from New England. Then, before I go West. Barry, that trip West's going to be our trip. You wait, if-you want to, but that's what you're going to tell me when I get back from New England."

"I—— All right, Lee. I'll think it out."

"Then you'll do it. Good God, Barry, how I love you!"

He had his moments of insight. On the ride back to the city that night, he was prompted to plead, not her own betterment, but her help to him. She couldn't even guess, he said, her influence over him. How much stronger it would be if she gave him her companionship! Think of what his money, one of these days, could do, with her guiding it! He wanted to do good with it some day. But, most of all, just being with her was what counted. He was a crude man who had never had time for the things she knew by instinct. But he loved those things; he was just waiting to learn from her and with her. and with her.

It had its effect on her. She listened. But as they came down through the park, something in the trembling of his arm as he slid it about her shoulder made her turn sharply toward him, and in the sliding light of a lamp she saw his eyes, close to hers and gleaming.

He deferred to her mood.

Her mood. Were there men who did not always call it that? Weren't there men who didn't laugh that little impatient-tolerant laugh, that "There! I went too fast. You must give 'em time!" Forever his precipitancy, never here—— Well, what was it a girl had? Just foolish, old-fashioned dreams?

"Hand in hand," Lee had said once to-night. When she thought "hand in hand," she thought of a sort of high,

wide place, with big horizons and clean winds, and two journeying with their eyes on some very splendid goal.

## CHAPTER VI.

When Elihu Peerpe sold his mills and retired to his estate, he stocked the place, not with horses or cows, but with bees. With these bees he lived alone, in a communion not poetic, but industrial. He liked bees because they were busy and because they hummed.

He had been used to work himself, and to seeing others work. He had lived in the crash of looms and the incessant labor of swarming toilers. And now the bees symbolized for him manufacture, and kept about him the atmosphere that he loved.

He enjoyed coming down to the city, to which he made rather frequent visits. There he found an intensified industry atmosphere, especially about the lower end of town, where he would stroll along Broadway, usually at or near the noon hour, in the manner of a sort of retired Hymenopter who had folded his wings and who chose to perambulate the paths between the tall flowers and contemplate, instead of assisting, the great pursuits of his order. Sometimes he had business to transact among those skyscrapers.

That was the case this morning, when, shortly before noon, he found himself in the rooms of the Amber Silk Company, in the private office of Lee J. Amber.

"The only thing, Mr. Amber," he was saying in his somewhat dictatorial voice, "is this—I'd like to have a more definite assurance that you are going to buy this land. You say you undoubtedly mean to acquire it?"

"Yes, undoubtedly, Mr. Peerpe." Lee Amber smiled briefly. "I'm negotiating for the place as fast as I can. There's a hitch, but I've pretty near got around that. The land's as good as mine right now."

"Well, all right, then. I just want to feel sure. I don't want a lot of uplift cranks bringing down a mob of orphan boys to overrun the country around me. You know what those cranks want it for?"

"A boy farm or something—yes. They've been pestering me to give it up, but let 'em buy some other property. There's plenty."

"Exactly, Mr. Amber. Now, I'd be pleased to have you for a neighbor, but this uplift farm—no, I can't stand for it! So I want to know if you mean to buy the land, for if you don't, I shall. I don't need it—it would be an outlay I haven't contemplated—but I will *not* have uplift backed up against me for the rest of my life. I shall follow your negotiations with interest. And now I'll be going. You're a busy man. I won't take up your valuable time talking."

Lee Amber shook hands heartily with the old gentleman.

"I'll let you know how it goes, Mr. Peerpe. Don't you worry about uplifters. That land's mine, and there's going to be one of the prettiest little country homes set up on it that you ever saw. And I'll be proud to be your neighbor, Mr. Peerpe."

"The sentiment is warmly reciprocated, sir." And Mr. Peerpe left, much gratified by the interview.

He went out and strolled once more down Broadway. There was a sort of joyousness in the note of industry this morning. Presently he neared Wall Street. Across the way a skyscraper was going up. The lunch hour had ended for the laborers up there, and again they were swarming the dizzy heights, fascinating Mr. Peerpe, or, rather, tantalizing him, because from immediately below he could get no real view. So he went over into Trinity yard.

It took much to lure him into a churchyard. He hated churches acridly,

and Trinity particularly, because it was so wealthy. But he must see a skyscraper.

From the paths he feasted his gaze. Up there was indeed industry. At those heights the luxurious offices of the future were like little honey cells. He sighed his appreciation.

Then, turning about to rest his eyes, he saw on the same path with him a black-haired young woman who had closed the book she was carrying and was now looking up intently at the skyscraper with something akin to the old gentleman's enthusiasm. He approached her approvingly.

"You like it, don't you?"

She did not start at his words. She just smiled at him. She had seen him as she had come down the path. Mr. Peerpe thought, "A handsome girl—and a capable." He noted her trim suit, the soft tint of her turned-back collar showing a V of splendid chest, the rounded length of her strong arms, the clear and remarkable eyes, and the humor at the corners of her mouth.

"Look!" she cried. A man swung out on a hoisted beam, high and far, nonchalantly riding the sky. She gazed enviously. "Oh!" she sighed, as the beam went up and up.

"Yes, that's getting things done, hey?"

He challenged her to appreciation. Finding that she responded, he fell into a discussion on industry. She listened attentively. She liked these little chance contacts of life. They were life's gratuities, and she was always grateful.

He asked her if she were employed around there.

Yes, she was a secretary in a private office.

"Ah. I like to see young women in industry. It begins to look as if they'd take the place of men one of these days. Young men are given over to strange fancies these days—uplift



"Yes, that's getting things done, hey?"

and reforms and socialism." He jabbed a gravestone with his cane. "I have a nephew. He's in this city, making a fool of himself about such nonsense. He might have lived a useful life and had a fine business. I had mills. Mills. He should have carried them on. I've sold them now. There's no one to carry them on. He was a promising boy."

"That was disappointing, sir." Barry was sympathetic. "I think I can understand. You built them yourself,

perhaps? And so, of course, you hoped your nephew would love them as you did."

"Exactly." Her discernment pleased him. "But he's paying for it. I cut him off without a cent."

"Oh."

"Why 'oh'? He deserves it."

"Yes, sir. But I was thinking—likely he has his view."

"He has indeed! And he may keep it! I'm through with him. You say you're a secretary?"

"Yes, sir."

"M-m. And I dare say a competent one. Now, if I still had my mills, I'd be tempted to make you an offer. But you'd not leave the city, probably?"

"Not very willingly—no, sir."

"I see. To some people, the country is irksome. I find it so if I stay long at a time. But my place up-country is nice."

"It must be. If I were rich, I'd have a country place. Not for myself. But——" She broke off.

"But what?"

"Oh, it's a notion, a working-girl notion. You say you like to see women in industry. We like to be in it, too. But there's too much theory going on about us. People butt in. They mean well, but they want to manage our lives. They forget that working people like to have spontaneity. Work and play—but our own play. Play handed out by organizers—organized fun—that's no fun at all. What the organizers ought to do is to give us better work hours, and time off to play, and we'd make our own play."

"But I'm getting off the point. What I meant was, there's one thing we do

need help for. That's when we're sick. You see, girls don't stand the strain the way men do. That's where the country would come in. Some big place to go and get well in—a big get-wellery—that's the notion I keep fooling with, off and on."

Mr. Peerpe had been regarding her thoughtfully. All at once she exclaimed; she had forgotten the time. She was bidding him good-by, but he followed her to the gate. This young lady had impressed him.

"It's very agreeable to meet such a young lady as you. I see that you like to read history. I don't mind telling you that I myself have written a history of the county where I live. Would you like to have a copy of it?"

"Oh, that would be splendid! Do you mean you'll send me one?"

"If you'll just give me your name and address. Give me your office address. I'll be in the city again next week, and I can leave it with you. It would be a pleasure to talk with you again."

She thanked him, and he wrote in his little notebook. Then a thought struck her.

"Don't be too hard on your nephew, sir. It was at least sincere of him to give up so much for his belief, wasn't it?"

"Sincere?" he exclaimed. "Nonsense! Bigotry—he's a bigot! He was brought up wrong."

"Then that's some excuse——"

"Not at all. At twenty-seven, a man is responsible. Here is my card."

She shook hands. He watched her go across the street.

When she was on the other side, she glanced at his card.

"Elihu Peerpe—funny name! Odd little old man—and nice!"

Mr. Peerpe, meantime, had glanced at the Maiden Lane number he had written down. He just perceived that

it was the same as Lee J. Amber's number. Perhaps she was in Amber's office.

"A get-wellery," he mused.

## CHAPTER VII.

"Self-made," Lee Amber had said. He thought it was creditable. So did Barry. She liked to reflect that she, too, was self-made. But there was a sadness about it, too.

Self-making is a journey. There's what you gain, and there's what you leave behind. It's pioneering. You outlive a place and move on to the next. There you pitch your tent, have intercourse with folks, nice folks, with whom you're tempted to linger in the pleasant spot. But there's the trail. Some night you shoulder your pack and slip away, so that the brothers who don't journey shall not feel the sadness—or the envy—that goes with farewells.

Barry Olliver had always been leaving others behind. Among the left behinds had always been men. At first it had been boys. She could remember the first boy. He had been her hero till she had beat him at lessons. Then, later on, there had been lads. In high school there had been two. She had passed them. In the big city she had already come to was a young chap who for a time had excelled her. She had tried not to catch up, and when she had caught up, she had tried not to outdistance him. But her journey energy had been greater than his. She had left him behind.

But there were always new ones ahead.

She was gratified when she discovered how she attracted men. In a girl like her, there comes a schoolboy stage when she will test herself on the man sex, as the schoolboy throws his stone and breaks windows and smashes birds' nests, not so much to demolish as to make sure of his skill.

As she got on in her line of work,

she had met types and more types of men, and they had all flattered her vanity. Yet it wasn't what she had done that they saw, but what she was. It was at this time that she had learned what lust is. It was partly her own fault. It was that terrible, mysterious energy in her; in spite of her control of it, there was always that surplus that would make her sling the stone. Then, for trophy, she got, not smashed eggs, but some bird of prey that had hidden, ready fledged, till her foolish stone stirred it and it swooped down.

At twenty-one she was a pessimist. Why was that swooping thing always in the nest? Then two or three added years taught her things. She even came to excuse some of the very disillusionings from which she had suffered. At twenty-five, which was now, she even had a philosophy.

Men are not yet used to seeing young girls taking the trail, unprotected and alone. These girls rouse surmise. They have proclaimed themselves free lances, and free means free—the provocative free. It seems that way to men.

Barry no longer resented it so passionately when she saw men misreading in her the freedom that her free didn't mean. It wasn't their cupidity, after all, so much as their stupidity. Moreover, they could be convinced. She herself had convinced some. It was just the having to convince that bothered her.

But in the literature of the day she saw a lot of rosy claptrap about women being as strong as men. She was as strong as any woman, and she had glimpsed her limit. She knew just why men can tempt. Money takes the place of energy. Even the girl who wants to go on gets where she'll take a lift on the way.

This was the temptation she was meeting just now.

A year ago she had become Lee

Amber's secretary. At that time he had not been divorced. Well, the inevitable had happened—the free lance had had to define her freedom. He hadn't believed at first, naturally. Then he had sulked. Then he had got his divorce. He had told her that his wife had been the one to ask for it. He had said that was before he had seen Barry at all.

Other men had wanted to marry her. They had come and gone. But she did really like Amber. But what bothered her was that, through all his protectiveness, she glimpsed at times a greedy something that seemed to try to dissemble its real outlines—the swooper bird. She would tell herself that she was mistaken; she would resent the experiences that had made her suspicious.

"Besides, men are men," she would philosophize in the end. But she knew it was not the biggest philosophy.

This was her attitude when she met Pitt Jepson, the writer.

He was not like any other man she had ever known, nor was she sure at all what drew her to him. He was puritanical. She felt cynical when she thought that. It made her want to sling the stone again. He was a writer. That was very wonderful to her. He was a man of family. That didn't mean so very much; she was no snob or toady. He was very good looking, but that was a surface attraction. But he himself was not surface. He was intense. Well, he was simply different.

She thought about him several times in the days between Sunday and Thursday.

#### CHAPTER VIII.

"Say, Barry, aren't you wearing your crêpe de Chine?"

"No, May. Isn't this blouse all right?"

"Sure it is." May completed a coif-



ture that put several factitious years on her eighteen real ones.

She was telling herself that the callers coming to-night meant nothing more than any other callers, but she was taken by a considerable anxiety to look her best. And not only look, but act. For, after all, Barry was the original attraction, and something was due her in the way of good behavior.

"I mustn't disgrace her by my carryings-on. They mustn't get any notion she's just any everyday stenog like me."

By "carryings-on" she meant chiefly flirting, a pastime she usually couldn't resist. But she planned a firm self-repression to-night, and also to keep strict guard over her vocabulary.

The big parlor was not adapted to the preliminaries of getting acquainted. Not only were Maggie Coates and Clara Mack entertaining male friends—Maggie at the piano with five new song hits—but all sorts of other callers were there. The result was that, after various struggles against the clamored rhythm of the song hits, the four escaped into the warm young evening outside and turned uptown for a stroll under the electric signs.

A movie diverted them first. They left it within an hour, however, and after that they found themselves in a confectioner's, eating sundaes at a corner table, while May Dune, already forgetful of deportment, related certain crisp little anecdotes of the downtown office regions and rapidly neared the flirtatious forbidden land.

In this tendency Mallory Crothers encouraged her. But he did so from a purpose. It had not been his original idea to let the little gamin capture him again to-night. The field—the Barry Olliver field—was open to him and to Pitt, and he was going to make a big try for the black-haired girl; so in that uptown walk he had actually outmaneuvered May Dune and left her and Pitt to bring up the rear.

The maneuver had not been so very difficult, however. Pitt had been self-conscious with the black-haired girl—Mal had counted on that—and Barry herself had gravitated to Mallory. At first he had been set up; it had almost looked as if she preferred him. But then he had decided that just there lay his mistake. She was too much at home with him. Her manner was frank and chummy in just the degree that damned it as sisterly.

"She's sized me up, and she sees nothing new in me, nothing interesting. I'm a common type; I know it."

Even the questions she had asked him hadn't deceived him. She was the sort of girl who would always be interested in the other fellow's pursuits. She had been eager and sympathetic and all that, but that, to-night, had been mostly her good nature. He felt sure of this because of the entirely different way in which she had asked him—presently—about Pitt.

He had seen then that she was a little in awe of the writer, a trifle shy. That was why she had started out with him, Mallory. Well, the field was open—true—but he couldn't compete by disparaging. So he had told her all the nice things he knew about Pitt, and he had even had recourse to his imagination for others. He had seen the difference in her interest then.

Now, in the ice-cream place, he was taken by an impulse he never afterward liked to reflect on. It was nothing less unsportsmanlike than to say to himself, "All right, let him have her. The sooner she sees through him, the better." If she's the girl I think she is——"

He did not even quite finish the thought, but he acted on it, letting May acquire him and launch him into a zesty flirtation.

But it happened that Pitt didn't have the expected effect on Barry. He had actually got rid, somewhere and some-



how, of some of his self-consciousness. He was talking to the girl, rather well, quite well enough to surprise Mallory considerably. He discussed matters Mal supposed he wouldn't discuss; he laughed at May's jokes as if he really understood them. Mal had to admit that, seen in this light, the writer had his attractions. And he had his looks.

They left the confectioner's for a further stroll up Broadway. It was now about eleven, and the electric primroses on the path of dalliance had reached their night-blooming perfection.

May was reckless. Mallory carried on the mood. It was pretty easy for him to carry things on. Ahead of them went the other two.

Barry Olliver had stopped analyzing and was letting things go. She had decided favorably. The writer was not the prig she had suspected. In spite of what she had said to May on Sunday, she had gone on suspecting—and being ashamed. But now she felt—or thought she felt—sure. He was nice, modest, a little old-fashioned, but she rather liked that; it wasn't rigid. He was rather unused to things, but he was pliable; he wanted to find out.

Once she was sure of a thing, she went ahead. She was exuberant. He, also, expanded. She was surprised at his responsiveness. But that was it—he needed bringing out, and it was always wonderful to help people discover themselves. She was gratified.

The first hint of the change came when he suddenly proposed a cabaret.

Still, while she was perplexed for a moment, she remembered that he was a writer, who must see things, and that he was unused to cabarets. Her own mind was out of doors that night, but she had pledged herself to help him in his discoveries. They waited for Mallory and May to catch up.

Mallory looked surprised, but he agreed.

"Which shall it be?"

"The Butterfly," said May.

"Oh—but that place——" said Barry, uninterested.

But Pitt acclaimed it.

For an instant her gaze met Mallory's. It was as if she had sought him, and in a sort of appeal. For a second, too, he seemed to come to her aid. She remembered that later. But then he laughed and gestured.

"On to the Butterfly, and the spreadings of wings—sparrow and Pegasus and all!"

It was plain that Pitt meant to do the honors. He insisted on food, and they must have a booth in the balcony to themselves. They must also drink.

Below them, a girl dressed in fall leaves danced on a stage to spurious music. The four in the booth watched her, and three of them assisted in getting an encore. Barry did not assist, nor did she drink all the cocktail. She sat back and fell suddenly thoughtful.

Evidently Pitt was unused to cocktails. The very first had the effect of unshackling him. He ordered another round. It began to dawn on Barry that he had the idea of sowing a wild oat. She looked at Mallory, but he was occupied with May. The second drink had inspired the girl to a very racy joke. Both the men laughed. Pitt, not looking at Barry, yet pulled his chair a little closer to her.

Once more Barry's gaze met Mallory's. She thought he flushed, but he turned away. In the clamor of applause, Pitt again hitched his chair a bit nearer. Barry saw his flushed face—and something in his eyes that was as familiar to her as all the years of her life.

Then the orchestra started a tune for general dancing. The audience betook itself to the floor.

"That's what you taught me at the club," said Pitt. "Would you like——"

She shook her head. But May in-

tended to enjoy herself. She and Mal-lory went down to the floor.

"Say," she prefaced, on the way down, "you know, at first I couldn't make out why Barry liked your friend. No offense, but he did strike me as a stiff. But I see now he's got the goods after all."

Mal stopped and glanced back up the stairway. His expression was disquieted, hesitant. Then he laughed, and next moment he and the sparrow were twirling about.

Barry was sitting back a little from the table. There was an instinctive withdrawal in that attitude, although she faced the writer steadily enough. She even smiled over at him, in that first moment that proclaimed them alone. He answered with a nervous laugh and a deepening of the flush in his face.

She began at once to talk—of anything that came into her head. Somehow she knew it would be a monologue—and his only responses, in fact, were monosyllables. As steadily as she talked, just as steadily did he watch her. She tried to call his attention to the other two, who were visible now and then below as they circled the floor.

"Where are they?" she asked. "Do you see them?"

Pitt leaned out.

"They're going out—into that little garden where the fountain is."

"But why didn't they come up here?"

"It doesn't matter, does it?" He leaned toward her along the table.

"They're getting on all right."

"It's a little late, isn't it?"

"No, it's early. It must be early. Time hasn't any meaning—not when one's with you. Will you let me do something?"

"Yes, certainly. What is it?"

"Call you 'Barry?'"

"Oh— But nearly every one does. If you like—"

"I like to say it. Barry. Barry, I've been calling you that ever since Sunday."

She laughed this off. He came nearer.

"I've been thinking of you ever since Sunday. I didn't know there were such girls as you. Do you know how wonderful you are?"

"No, fortunately that supreme knowledge is denied me."

She could retreat no farther from him without moving her chair. He took one of her hands. His face was close to her. It came to her to wonder, in just one instant of penetration, how she had ever thought him handsome. He was a composite just then of all the others who had talked and acted as he was doing now.

She started to rise, smiling carelessly.

Then he was on his feet. With one move of his arm, he had wrenched the curtain nearly to, and he stepped toward her. She tried to evade him, and he seized her.

"Barry! Barry!" And then he said something else, hardly articulate. But it was too familiar to be mistaken: "I love you!" That, with his flushed face almost against her own, his breath hot and stammering and odious.

She pushed him vigorously, but he was stronger than she. He got her even closer, and he kissed her.

"Where are you going?" he stammered, retreating.

She said nothing. Her disdain of even one word was the thing that drove home to him some sense of the enormity of the mistake he had made. He managed to reach her just before she pulled the curtain.

"Don't go—I mean—I'm sorry— Oh, don't go without a word! I'm sorry—I'm ashamed! Miss Olliver, won't you let me— I didn't understand!"

Unfortunately for him, his last word

was the very one that made her pause. He partly comprehended the abysmal scorn of the gaze she fixed on him.

"No, of course you didn't understand." She said it quietly. "Neither did I. That's the trouble." She stared at him a moment, impersonally.

"But if you'd let me apologize—I've been a brute— You had no reason to expect—"

"Ah—but I had! Every reason. If I'd only let myself believe it before!"

"What?"

"What you thought last Sunday. Say what you like, you were slumming that day. Oh, intellectual slumming, if you like—"

"Slumming!"

"We were working girls. We sang cheap songs, we danced— You thought they were bad dances, didn't you? And on Sunday, too—that! Even Mrs. Dorming—even our Mrs. Dorming—wasn't quite enough of a guarantee. You Puritan ignoramus! You overgrown, narrow-minded prude! And I saw it coming, and *still* I wouldn't believe! Idiot! Crazy idiot that I was!"

And she threw open the curtain and left the booth.

She met May and Mallory below, just coming from the little garden that joined the dancing floor. In her excitement, she did not notice the strange subduedness of them.

"Come, May. We're going home."

She turned to Mallory.

"We'll go on together, May and I—if you'll just get a taxi."

He glanced upstairs and seemed to comprehend the situation. He was very solemn. He got the taxi and put them in. He hung on the door a moment, staring up at Barry. Afterward she remembered the somber questioning of his gaze, and how they both seemed to understand—how she understood that he, himself, was full of self-condemnation.

The taxi sped away.

It was May who spoke first.

"I don't know what blew up for you, Barry, and I'm not asking, but you can ask me what *I* drew."

"What?" Barry emerged from her silence. "You don't mean—"

"Sure I do. I got what I went out to get."

"You don't mean that Mallory—"

"Yes. But it was my fault. I pestered him. Just what you warned me against. But that's not the point."

"Well?"

"Well, you see, when he was about to kiss me—he—yes, Barry, honest to Gawd, he stopped, and didn't. He didn't!"

"Yes?"

"Yes. Instead, he said—he said, 'Sparrow, don't run it too far. Why can't you and me be just friends?' And the way he said it—the way he looked— Gawd, Barry, *that* never happened to *me* before! It made me feel so queer, and I laughed, and the tears came—and he laughed, too, shaky for a minute, and then he took my hand strong and friendly, and he says, 'Then it goes, sparrow? We're good friends?' Oh, Barry, I could uv cried!"

Lying awake that night, Barry felt that the old pessimism had come back. "What's the use?"—that was the old philosophy. What was the use of this vivid living of life, this sharpening and heightening of the faculties, if the crude, clutching hands wanted only one, and the lowest, of all the manifestations of the wonderful force? The ruthless wreckage and wastage of all the rest, the big, fine rest! They called men the constructors. They were wasters, squanderers. At bottom they were vandals. "Men are men."

## CHAPTER IX.

When Mallory went back after seeing off the taxi, he could not find Pitt. The waiter, clearing away the glasses

She tried to evade him, and he seized her. "Barry! Barry!" And then he said something else, hardly articulate. But it was too familiar to be mistaken: "I love you!"



in a state of deep disgust, brightened at sight of him, especially as Mal reached into his pocket.

"The young man left, sir. He seemed upsetlike. Thank you, sir."

Mal went out thoughtfully. He walked home.

Next day he went down to Pitt's. Pitt had gone away for the week-end, the young servant girl told him. He hadn't left word where.

"Was he—— Did he look as if something had gone wrong?"

"Yes, sir. He did look that way. He was noivuss."

"I see. He must have had bad news."

Mal again sought the street. From the seminary fence, he viewed the Working Girls' Club, where She lived. She would be at work now. He wondered where she worked.

He started uptown.

"What could it have been? He must have made a glorious ass of himself. God knows what's bottled up in him. I ought to have seen, by the way he acted before. He's got to apologize. I'll see to that, if it's my last act in life. But," after a little cogitation, he

added, "so have I got to apologize. It was my fault. It was what I hoped he'd do—bore her. I didn't mean him to— What on earth *could* it have been? She's no prig. It must have been particularly—" He couldn't find the adjective.

When he got home, he wrote a note to Barry Olliver, asking if he might—or, rather, saying that he would—wait at the corner of the street next morning, and if she would give him just a moment of her time—

That day at noon, as Barry was leaving the office for lunch, whom should she encounter in the anteroom but her eccentric friend of Trinity yard, Mr. Peerpe. Moreover, he was engaged in friendly converse with Lee Amber.

"Ah, here she is!" exclaimed the compact little old gentleman with satisfaction.

Lee Amber looked on, amused. When Mr. Peerpe had asked him if a Miss Olliver didn't work for him, he had been surprised. But when his visitor had explained how they had met, and the great interest that so intelligent a young woman had aroused in him, he had understood. Just for a moment he might have been suspicious of this elderly admiration, but a little contemplation did away with the thought. The dry, acrid little old gentleman was not an old fool.

Mr. Peerpe wanted Barry to come with him to lunch. He invited Lee as well, but Lee was due to lunch with a business man.

Barry guided her new friend, not to a swell restaurant, but to a stenographers' tea room on Beekman Street. Here he beheld some hundred young women, industrially alert, partaking of home-cooked food at little tables. It was, to Mr. Peerpe, with his love of energy, a stimulating atmosphere. He commented with great admiration upon the industrial life for women, and he

consumed with keen appetite several viands to which he was unaccustomed, such as chicken-liver sandwich and walnut cup cake.

"How did you know that I worked at Mr. Amber's?" Barry asked him.

"I didn't know. I went to Amber's because of a business matter. He's buying some land that adjoins mine in the country."

"Oh, the Mount Royal estate? I've written several letters for him about that. And it's near you?"

"Just on the east of me. I'm very pleased at having him for a neighbor. A fine, energetic young fellow. He'll go far, that chap will. Yes, I shall be glad to have him neighbor me. I'm thankful he's kept those boy-farm fools from getting it. I couldn't endure *them*."

"Boy farm, sir?"

"Yes. A lot of uplift idiots want to overrun a decent, quiet countryside with howling, yelling immigrant boys. But that's been put a stop to, thank Heaven!"

"They were trying to buy the same land?"

"Exactly." And Mr. Peerpe rehearsed his grievances.

Barry grew thoughtful. She knew why Lee Amber wanted that land. She knew about his hopes of building a home in the country, and why he wanted that home. But she was thinking of the orphan boys, too. She loved boys.

"Why did they settle on this particular piece of land, sir?"

"Well, the fact was, the owner of it, Rawlinson, who died last fall, had been thinking of letting them have it. I guess these uplifters had pulled the wool over his eyes. But he died suddenly, and his executor, a fellow called Bancroft, is a man of better discernment, I'm glad to say. He's the one your employer—"

"Yes, sir, I've written letters. But the boys, sir——"

"What? A herd of ignorant little rowdies! You recall that I told you I had a nephew who had sorely disappointed me?"

"I remember very well."

"Well, he's one of them—one of the uplifters. A pack of reform fools!"

Barry looked at her plate. Here was one of the reasons for his rabid opposition to the boy-farm people. He was spiteful about his nephew. But somehow she liked the nephew. She liked his idea.

As they were leaving the tea room, she returned to the subject.

"I know a little, sir, how you feel about uplifters. I feel that way, too. But are you sure these people are that sort? I mean—I'd call them starters, rather than uplifters. Starting orphan boys off healthy and strong—so that they can grow up busy and useful. Perhaps you were always healthy. But poor boys without folks— You must forgive me, sir—and I don't know your nephew—but I just can't help having a liking for him."

"That obstinate, self-willed boy?" cried Mr. Peerpe. "Do you think I'd let him come there and triumph over me, me that he defied?"

"But would he feel that way? Is he vindictive?"

"He's self-willed and bigoted. He's no nephew of mine. That's just why he wants this particular land—he knows how it would annoy me. Let him get other land. Most certainly," added the old gentleman grimly, "he'll have to. He'll find there's no other thing for him to do."

As he left her at the elevator, he said:

"Oh, by the way, Mr. Amber has the history I brought you. It was heavy, and I left it with him. I hope you'll like it. And now will you come with me to lunch again some day?"

Of course she would. Crisply he lifted his hat and vanished into the crowds.

## CHAPTER X.

That afternoon, as indeed on most afternoons, Lee Amber made occasion for a talk with Barry before she left the office. When she came into his room with her hat on, she found him at his desk, studying blue prints and photographs.

"This is that piece of land I'm buying. Tell me what you think of it."

He gave her his chair and bent over her while she examined the prints.

"It's a big place, isn't it? And it must be beautiful. Ah!" when she saw the photographs. "Yes, very beautiful. I can see why you like it, Lee."

"Well, I want you to like it, too. It's just your style—stream and rocks—big, jagged rocks—and a glen and a fall, see? And the sort of woods I *know* you like."

"Yes, and fields." She glanced at a picture of a great cornfield, with woods at the back and a meadow beside it. "Oh, it is a place, Lee!" She sighed her delight. "And this is the house?"

"Yes. Old place, but I'm not so sure it ought to be pulled down, are you? Just fixed up and added to. It sort of fits into the scenery. Good plain stuff. I know you like that, and so do I. I hate these gimcrack houses. But I wanted your advice."

"Yes, you're right. It's a fine old house. Have you really bought it?"

"Oh, just about. The thing won't be settled definitely till I get back from New England. I suppose your friend, the old gentleman, told you about the folks who want it for a farm?"

"Oh, yes. He's upset. Poor, funny, nice old person!"

She was studying the photographs. He bent a little closer. He did not touch even her chair back, but he



watched the strong young curves of her shoulders and neck and the blue-black sweep of her hair away from her cheek. Everything about her absolutely satisfied him.

"Lee, isn't it a very big place for you to take? I mean, do you need so much land?"

"Why, yes. I'm going to run it to pay, you know. Make it a real estate—crops and gardens and some stock. Not all at once, but in time."

She was silent again. Then she said: "I was just thinking about those orphans. It would be an ideal place for them."

"I don't see," he said, "that you need to worry about the orphans. They can get other places."

"I'm not worrying. I'm just thinking— Well, from what Mr. Peerpe said, I imagine maybe those folks have already put out money on this deal, and it's a sort of staggerer to them to have some one else come along— It will mean another year, anyhow, before they'll get started, even if they do find another place. I can see the orphans losing a year—and then again I can see them here, in these woods and jumping about these rocks."

"You mean," said Lee slowly, and not without difficulty, "that you'd really rather the orphans had it than me?"

She felt the disappointment in his tones.

"I feel the way you do about its beauty—and you knew just exactly the sort of place I would rave over. I was only thinking that you could stand to wait a year better than the orphans can—to look around for another place."

"You know why I don't want to wait another year, Barry."

"Well, not for everything—perhaps. But—"

"But?" he said quickly, and got hold of her.

She flushed and laughed, pulling away. Quietly, he let her go.

## CHAPTER XI.

Mal waited just around the corner of the seminary. When he saw her approaching, his heart pounded unexpectedly. With a sort of triumphant thrill, he perceived that she smiled. He was right, then; she *was* a brick.

Even the sisterliness of her handshake hardly bothered him.

"I want to say something, Miss Olliver," he began. "Not that it's—"

"Why bother?" she said quickly.

"I think I must. You'll see why. I don't want to mess things up. I don't even know what happened, you know. I've not laid eyes on him since I left you in that booth. He'd gone when I went to find him. He's away now."

"But it's all over," she said. "I can understand it now, anyhow. You see, it was all pretty sudden, the way we got acquainted, and sometimes those things work and sometimes they don't. If they don't, you just pass them up and go along sensibly. Anyway, he sent a note. He apologized."

"Oh, yes, he'd do that. He's ashamed—you bet he is. He's had a lesson."

Mal wondered mightily what the note had said.

"Now, I'll be fair," she said suddenly. "It wasn't exactly your friend's fault, entirely."

"Don't say 'friend,'" Mal interrupted. "He's only a fellow some other fellow thought I'd like, and we sort of tried it out. But I was beginning to—"

"Well, Mr. Jepson, then. I see now how I tried to think him into being what he wasn't. I was out for culture and intellect, you see, and I knew he wrote. It brought out the toady in me. I should have seen he was a—Puritan—but I wasn't using my eyes. Even when he said 'cabaret,' I'd worked up such a notion about him, I refused to understand. I ought to have known."



"No, don't be so sure of that. I don't like to think your judgment infallible. You see, I want you to do a little reconsidering of my own case. I want to ask something of you. I want to ask you to let me come to see you."

He was standing bareheaded, looking at her out of keen, rather compelling eyes. She suddenly felt that this was the first time she had actually seen him. She saw a different man, one not flippant or whimsical and not adulatory. He smiled a little at her, as if he meant: "Take your time—but say yes."

She held out her hand frankly.

"Do come!"

"Monday night?"

"Yes, that's all right." And with a nod and a smile, she was gone.

Mal did not know exactly what he wanted of Barry. Friendship was all he could figure out just now. It was a lot. He didn't ask himself if it could stay that on his side. He preferred to assume it could, and he thought: "She can help me. She'll love to take part in my notions, and with her interest in things, I can do bigger work."

Isn't it always a man's first feeling about a woman—expediency? He sees her fitting in. She will have this effect or that. It's a matter of applying her to something.

## CHAPTER XII.

On Sunday, Lee Amber took Barry down into New Jersey to see his people.

He was a different Lee in his native atmosphere, the rural domestic, and the simple, natural way in which he slipped back into it impressed Barry.

His people impressed her, too, especially his mother—a tall, quiet old lady, full of unobtrusive energy, with a slowly gathering, beautiful smile and a deep, mothering voice. Mr. Amber had died when Lee was a boy, but an uncle lived with them, and two sisters, both

older than Lee, while Ralph Amber, the older brother, managed the farm.

After dinner they showed her the house, a fine old place with a modern kitchen and an ancient attic. And then she and the mother had a half hour together, and she saw into that unfamiliar phase of Lee's life when he had been a boy, poor, but already starting out on the self-making. The farm was one of the witnesses to his success. It had almost slipped from them at Mr. Amber's death. Ralph had kept it till he had gone to Cuba and lost his health. Then Lee had saved it and restored it. Now Ralph, regaining his health, was managing it excellently.

It was at supper that Barry had her first moment of conscious analysis. All the time up to then she had been receiving and responding. Even now, it was not the family she thought of; it was Lee. He had been a relaxed, a domestic man, all day. That was it—was he too relaxed?

It was an odd question, but it flashed over her. His people looked up to him, adored him. The mother and sisters thought simply of pleasing him. The uncle—a funny, silent little old gentleman—sat always where he could watch him and listen to him. Even Ralph deferred to him.

It was not all this worship of Lee that bothered her—it was the way he took it; not as his reward for what he'd done—she knew him better than that—but in the way of the tired business man who likes to come home and find sympathy and domesticity—the slippers out on the hearth, the favorite dish, the newspaper, the chair beside his for companionship and quiet talk—to rest him up for the morrow's work, which for the nonce he is to be made to forget.

She knew that it was in this sort of thing that his wife had failed him.

At sunset they started back for the city.

"I love your folks! I love them!" she cried, leaning toward him over the steering wheel. "They're splendid!"

It was a straight stretch of road. He turned to her, and for several seconds she felt his gaze on her, and its brooding satisfaction.

He did not once make love to her.

"Don't I really fit in with those folks of his?" she asked herself, as she lay

in bed that night. "I came from just such people. Isn't it snobbery and toadery, wanting to get in with the other sort, the readymades? My manners and 'polish'—they're half baked, aren't they? Don't I belong with the rough cuts? But the rough cuts don't satisfy me. Even when they're fine and real and splendid. I could have married men among them, and I always back out and look up to the readymades, to the people who have culture—no, not family so much, but whose *brains* are cultured, people who think the artistic or the professional things. Yes, I'm a snob."

This old conflict between her two selves was going on in her—the self she called the snob, which was the pioneer, the trail hitter, the seeker of beyonds, and the more primitive woman in her who would settle back, be taken care of, adorned—she put away the final word, owned—because she had glimpsed the day when she would want to be "ridden" on the journey, be given a boost.

### CHAPTER XIII.

Out in the balmy void that was the night, two worlds were sliding by, one above the other. The upper was the slower and the more brilliant, and it mirrored itself in the swift, black wetness of the lower, which was the Hudson. Past these moving panoramas glided the ferryboat that

Barry was staring dreamily. "Do you know how much I loved it once? Well—I tried to write a poem about the towers."



went to Communipaw, which is a three-mile river ride from Twenty-third Street downstream to the Jersey shore.

At the upper corner of the boat, Manhattanward seated, were Barry and Mallory. And as before them revolved the physical world in its rich layers, so they were unrolling their life worlds to each other, in vivid panoramas that mingled dark and light in much the fashion of the river and the island sliding past them in the night.

They found that they had both come to the city at about the same time. Both were minus the ties of family; both were poor. Both had tried innumerable trades, for which they had improvised experience and efficiency, getting jobs without references, just on nerve. They had had extraordinary adventures with employers and jobs. It was immense fun, tinged with sadness, to relive the glee and zest of their bitter fight, their glorious, impudent make-shifts to live, the wild or dismal pranks they had played on their anatomies.

She told him of the time she had been a nursemaid; he narrated an experience of taking pet dogs to walk. She had been a companion; he had read to a blind man. She had washed dishes in restaurants; he had worked on the docks. She had sung in a chorus; he had been barkeep in a low saloon. He had the best of her in outdoor sleepings—she had never park-benched it at night—but she was ahead of him on pawnshops.

By this time they were on the return trip from Communipaw. But the ferry-boat was quiet—the season was too young for crowds, though the night was uncommonly warm—so they sat where they were, and were presently mid-stream down the river again, and deeper than before in their reminiscences, because they had got to purposes now—that is to say, *his* purposes.

Mallory had not meant to get on to his hobbies, but presently he was in full

swing. And, talking earnestly, he was a different Mal. He had taken off his hat; sometimes his face came close to hers, and she saw it glow, or smolder, and his small, keen eyes were sometimes snapping, sometimes dreaming with an even keener intensity. Sometimes his whole face grinned; two or three times, unconsciously, it smiled finely. That was when he talked of prisons and of children.

"I—I've got to tell you something," she broke out all at once, in the midst of a small mutual silence. "I sized you up all wrong at first—that night, you know. I've owned up how foolish I was about things that night, but I don't see how I could have missed the mark so far in your case. You care about things. You care tremendously. I liked you, you know, but I didn't see what I see now."

He tried not to show the pleasure he felt.

"I was running loose that night," he said. "That's the trouble—I work in harness all right for a while, and then I turn myself out to pasture, and——"

The boat had once more reached Communipaw. Mal remembered how much more fun it is to stand on the lower deck, at the front, and they went down and stood at the prow. The flat prow swatted broad waves and sent them gabbling like cackling chickens before an automobile. The black water glided swiftly, and the lighted island grew bigger and brighter.

They talked of the city.

"It's like being in love," said Mal. "I mean, getting off at one side like this. It doesn't help you to criticize. You don't criticize the person you're engaged to. You just see from a new view, and get a fresh crush."

Barry was staring dreamily.

"Do you know how much I loved it once? Well—I tried to write a poem about the towers."

"Did you? But why do you say 'tried'? Didn't you succeed?"

"Of course not. I never even finished it. I can't *write*! But I struggled hard." She laughed.

They were coming now up to the wharves of the big liners. Mal bent close to her.

"Say, I swear I believe I'm going to make a confidence to you. I feel it coming over me."

"Yes?" she said quickly.

He laughed awkwardly.

"Well—shall I? All right, then. It seems queer, but— Oh, anyhow, here goes. I write verses. That's what I want to do, you know. Hardly any one knows it but you."

She was motionless a moment. Then she put her hand on his arm.

"Oh!" she cried. He felt as if she were asking him for all his stuff to read, and he were handing it to her. "Oh!"

"Yes," he said, laughing again. "Can you beat it?"

When, about an hour later, he left her at the club, he said:

"There! I feel like tackling the job ahead of me to-morrow."

She asked him what job.

"I've got to see a fellow about some land a crowd of us wants for a farm for boys. A fellow called Amber. I meant to tell you about those boys, but I got on to other things—my verses. Egotism to the bone, hey?"

She did not answer. She was thunderstruck.

"I'll tell you next time, if I may," he added. "There'll be a next time, won't there?"

She was staring down at him. At last she stirred.

"Yes, yes, you must tell me next time." And then she held out her hand.

"Good night." And she ran up the steps.

#### CHAPTER XIV.

Mallory was making notes from some reports the next morning when Pitt Jepson came in, on pretext of getting a book Mal had borrowed.

"Oh, sit down," said Mal, not very enthusiastically. "When did you get back?"

"Last evening. I went off to finish up an essay. I can work better in the country sometimes."

"If he's been writing," thought Mal, "it's taken a lot out of him."

"Excuse me. I'll run on through these papers. I can listen at the same time."

He did listen, as Pitt waded through the circumlocutions by which he was approaching the uppermost subject, which Mal guessed well enough and in which he refused to help him by so much as a syllable.

"What have you been doing?" asked Pitt presently.

"Oh, various things."

Pitt got up and walked around, talking of nothing in particular. He was irritable, too. At last he broke out testily:

"I saw you last night—you two."

Mal looked at him a moment.

"Oh. You did."

"Yes. I'd have—I meant to go to see her myself."

"Too bad if I anticipated you, Pitt. But the early bird, et cetera."

"Did she tell you?"

Mal laid down his pen.

"You are the limit!"

"I was something of a brute that night, I'll admit."

"Brute? You flatter yourself."

"Then she did tell you!"

Mal got up.

"You damned cad! We never mentioned or thought of you. Certainly I didn't. I don't know what you did that night——"

Pitt had flushed smartingly.

"I kissed her."

"I see."

"It was the drinks."

"Oh, not Eve, but the apple! Why didn't Adam think of that?"

"Well, I'm *not* used to wine."

"You seemed to be trying to get used. You ordered them. It wasn't complimentary to your guests—"

"It's what they do in cabarets."

"Who insisted on cabarets?"

"I suggested. You others, you and that other girl—"

"Oh, now it was *us*! See here, Pitt, you haven't been writing. You've been thinking of that pretty little fiasco of yours and nothing else in the world. You don't care a hang how the girl felt that night, but you care how you looked. It's not my affair, but I'd say this—I'll guess she hasn't time or inclination to bother with you and your vanity."

"She seems to have time for you," said Pitt, with sudden savagery.

Mal observed him for a moment.

"She was good enough to let me call. She found out we were interested in a lot of the same things, and we've had a good deal of the same grind getting on. I prize very, very highly her friendliness. And now, Pitt, if you'll excuse me, I've got to get downtown to see that Amber fellow about the Mount Royal land."

When he left Mal, Pitt walked up-street irresolutely. He had wanted to ask Mal for the girl's office address, but he hadn't been able to. Mal had been right—he could think of nothing else but of seeing her again. He couldn't endure the smart of his shame. Somehow he must see her. He turned into a drug store and phoned Ned Sammitt.

"Ned, where is this Amber's place? I've got to catch Mal Crothers before he takes a train."

Ned gave him the address.

"Exactly, sir," Mal was saying cordially. "I'll be brief."

Lee smiled. He was sitting carelessly, as if the interview were to be very short, but he wasted in no gestures or impatience any of the energy of his big, well-built body. His gaze was fixed on his visitor. Mal felt that he had been thoroughly scrutinized and sized up by those keen eyes. Lee had explained that he was leaving town today for two weeks.

"You've got more money than we," went on Mal frankly, "but we think we have a much bigger claim. It's that claim we might talk over, just on terms of reason. Mr. Amber, you're one of the men who see what's coming down the pike. For instance, airships. Don't tell me you haven't planned the day when you'll run back and forth from your country place in an airship, just as you run back and forth now from—wherever you live—in your car. The day's coming when the country will be every one's home, and the city will just be a big office building. I won't talk about that, but you know it's coming."

"Well, we want to teach our boys the art—or the trade—of the country. We're going to educate them, but in the land, too. We want to nab some of the menfolks in the making, the city kids, the bright ones, the stunted ones, the fighters and waifs and guttersnipes and dreamers. We want to give a chance to the kids who haven't any chance." Suddenly, Mal bent his small, bright eyes on the other and fired a question like a pistol shot: "Mr. Amber, aren't you a self-made man?"

Lee drew back. This touch of the personal jolted him. Mal gestured amiably.

"Sure you are. You've been a boy who could have used help along the way. You see, I knew your wife's brother, Tom. I've heard something of your career. I saw you once, too."



"I wondered where in the devil I'd seen you," muttered Lee.

"And when you look back, you can see where your strength was wasted when it needn't have been. Of course you believe in struggle. So do we. But you don't believe in wastage. Your life shows that, and your office, here. Well, we just aim to prevent wastage. And we don't want to waste another year or two hunting another place to begin our work. That's all."

There was a silence. Lee still gazed at him steadily, but there was hesitancy in the way he strummed on the table and in the compressions of his mouth.

Something warned Mal not to interrupt.

And then Barry Olliver entered the room with some letters.

"Oh!" she exclaimed, and stopped dead.

Mal leaped from the chair, half up-setting it. She flushed vividly. He stepped toward her, his hand outstretched.

"Why, Miss Olliver! I didn't know that you——"

"Yes, I'm Mr. Amber's secretary," she managed to say, and she tried to withdraw her hand.

He let it go, laughing exuberantly.

"This is bully! Imagine! Of course I knew you were something 'way up and important."

Lee had risen. No detail of the little incident had escaped him, just as no detail had escaped him of Mallory's manner and dress. He had sized up the easy distinction, the well-bred tones and careless phrases, of his visitor, all the things he himself had tried so hard to acquire. And when Mal had fired that shot at him, "Aren't you self-made?" for a moment Lee had felt self-made, in the unfinished, raw state which the other, well-born and educated, had never known. Mal had not meant that, and what he had gone

on to say had banished the momentary feeling, but now it had come back.

"I'll sign the letters," Lee said to Barry, and took them from her, looking fixedly into her face and then at Mallory. And as he signed, he added: "You know each other, I see."

"Yes," laughed Mal, his eyes on the girl. She was still flushed.

The pen slipped deftly over the pages. Then Lee rose and turned to his guest.

"Mr. Crothers, I'm sorry, but you'll have to give up that Mount Royal idea. What you said about the boys may be all right, but I advise you to find another place. And I'll tell you this—even if I didn't buy it, some one else would. An old gentleman who lives next to it came down here on purpose to say that he wouldn't stand being neighbored by your boys, and if I didn't take the land, he would. And he meant it."

Mal stepped back.

"Say, tell me, what was his name? Was it Peerpe?"

"Yes. Do you know him?"

"He's my uncle."

It was Barry who exclaimed. Lee looked at her a moment. There was a grin playing about his mouth—and not the amiable grin she knew.

"Your uncle! Can you beat it? Well, then, I don't need to tell you your mission is hopeless. And now you'll have to excuse me. I'm sorry, but—that's the best I can do." He turned toward the inner office, giving Barry the letters.

She did not see him. She was staring at Mallory.

Mallory paled slightly. Then he drew himself up and smiled at Barry. It was almost as if he were reassuring her because he guessed how she felt. He said, "Good morning," to Lee Amber. Then he was gone.

But he did not leave the building. The biggest thing about his disappoint-



ment was that, after all, he did need to be consoled. He must see Barry and tell her.

It was lunch time. If he waited down here in the hall, she would come down presently on one of the elevators. Perhaps she would go with him to lunch.

The crowds were already coming down. Almost at once, the hall was quite filled. There were four large elevators coming down one after another, disgorging office folk. Hands in pockets, he waited at the foot of the steps, so that he could watch all the elevators.

All at once he glimpsed her. He was darting forward to catch her when he stopped and drew back. Concealed by the crowd, he followed, the flush dying from his face.

She was with Amber. He had her close by the arm, and she was laughing up into his face. In the press at the doorway, Mal saw him slip his arm about her—protectingly, possessively. He pressed nearer to them on an impulse of what Wells calls "the inelegance of jealousy," trying to catch their words. He succeeded.

"But, Lee, we were there last time."

"I know, dear, but we can be alone there. It's the only place, and—this is my last chance to be with you for two weeks—"

She nodded, and his hand slipped up along her arm and he guided her out at the thronged doorway. There was no mistaking his words or his manner.

It came slowly to Mal that some one was standing by him, some one disagreeably triumphant. He looked up. It was Pitt.

"That's Amber she's with! I asked a man I saw talking to him."

Mal realized that Pitt had really spoken these words. How the Puritan came to be there he did not even think. There he was, his prig face malicious with what he had seen and heard.

"Why shouldn't she be with Amber?" said Mallory coldly.

"What? He a married man! Pretty thick, I'd say. Tell me, does she work for him?"

Mal swung on his quondam friend.

"How you can live with yourself, Jepson, beats me! But I know this—I can't live with you or in sight of you, you damned cad!" And Mal plunged into the crowds and out to the street.

## CHAPTER XV.

"No, Lee, I stood up for the boy farm on principle. And I stand up for it now. I just can't help it."

Lee compressed his sensitive lips, but presently he managed to smile. He preferred to conceal his jealousy. He had soon accepted her explanation of how she had met Mal, and that it had nothing to do with Mr. Peerpe—that she had really been as much surprised as he on that point.

"But it's going to be awkward, isn't it, when they find out? The old gentleman's coming here again, and I suppose this Crothers fellow will be running after you, too?"

"I didn't begin it," she laughed. "But it's funny, and I do enjoy the situation, I'll own up. If it develops, I don't mind."

"You'll be trying a reconciliation, though."

"I might want to, later. Though it's none of my business."

"You do expect to see this Crothers again?"

"I hope so, Lee."

Her eyes were dancing. Something in her had been pirouetting ever since she had grasped the whole situation about Mal and his eccentric uncle. Lee saw this vivacity, but he controlled himself. Above everything, he wished to leave a good impression on her.

"You can't blame me for being jealous," he said, so good-naturedly—

and yet with just enough wistfulness—that she was quite impressed.

"You pretend that—and for two weeks you won't have a thought in your head but business. As if I didn't know!"

"As if you didn't know just what is in my head all the time," he said gently, "back of every thought, ruling everything——"

She made a nervous little movement that had a sort of appeal in it. He nodded.

"I know. I promised I wouldn't. And when I come back, you'll tell me—— I know that, too."

He was wonderful to the very last, saying nothing more on the great subject, just now and then letting her see what he felt. He left that afternoon.

For several days, leaflets had been coming to him at the office, pamphlets from railroads and resorts in the Far West and the Northwest. Before he went, he told her to open them and others that would come. They had pictures, and she loved those pictures of the far-away, mighty regions she had dreamed of for years. It was a deft touch—to leave her those silent, eloquent appeals—and they affected her powerfully.

When he had gone, she thought:

"I ought to have said a little more about this Mallory Crothers—that it's just a friendly interest on both sides—and I've always wanted, *wanted* a man friend. And if the chance has come, I shan't let it go by! And he gave up a fortune because he wanted to live his own life! Oh, I like that! Oh, you fiendish old Uncle Peerpe!"

In fact, although it was "none of her business," the idea of a reconciliation began to have a certain fascination for her.

It was three or four days before she heard from Mallory Crothers. Then he asked when he could call. She said that night, and cut her singing lesson.

Twice already this new friend of hers had given Barry a surprise, forcing her to make over her ideas of him. To-night, again, he was another man. She felt something in him that bothered her, lapses of his habitual good nature and talkativeness, when he would be looking at her with sudden and anxious questionings. She thought it must be because of the Lee Amber incident, and after a while she spoke about it frankly.

"I knew he was your rival for that land—I mean, when you told me the other night, just when you were leaving—but I didn't say anything, because—well, it was such a surprise, and then——"

"Oh, I understood that. You meant to spare me, and I appreciate it."

"I wish you had it for your boy farm, just the same."

"Do you mean that?" and he brightened. Then he was wary. "Lee Amber is a rival, all right. But aside from that, I took quite a liking to him. A man of character—and his office showed it. The clerks and folks around, they were alert and capable, but they didn't look overworked or worried."

"He's a good employer. And he is a man of character—you're right."

And she told him things about Lee and about his people, things that showed she was pretty familiar with him. She was warm in her praise.

Then she dropped that subject. She was thinking, really, of another, and one that she was shy about; but she braved it.

"You said you'd bring some of your poems?"

He admitted that he had kept the promise.

"Then," she said with ill-concealed greediness, "won't you read some of them?"

He hadn't meant to read them, he

said. He'd leave them with her, to glance over when she had time.

That wouldn't do.

"I'm not literary, you know," she laughed, "and when I think you could teach me poetry—I guess it's nervy, but if you *would* read them—just a few—just one or two—would you?"

In bed that night, when Barry had read and reread those verses, she could still see Mallory, asprawl, ugly and dynamic, and once more transformed into another being, the poet. She was stimulated and awed.

Yes, he had said, he was getting some things published.

When he had left, he had lapsed again into that awkward, anxious state, as if he wanted to ask her something or to tell her something.

She fell asleep wondering if she could possibly reconcile him and his uncle, and if she could possibly get Lee Amber to give up that land. If she were to marry Lee, he ought to grant her that boon, for a friend of hers.

#### CHAPTER XVI.

In the days that followed, Mr. Peerpe came more than once to see Barry, and he was increasingly canny, so that she began to wonder whatever he had up his sleeve, for he had something; that was plain. Then one day he was quite nervous and irritable, and quite the oddest symptom of this state was a sudden testiness about her employer, Lee Amber. He was very ambiguous, but she gathered that he must

His hand slipped up along her arm and he guided her out at the thronged doorway. There was no mistaking his words or his manner.



have written Lee on some matter—perhaps an investment—and that the reply had annoyed him. Soon after that, he phoned her one evening, and this time he was as amiable as he had been testy. He said that if she would come to lunch with him the next day, he would have something to tell her, something he hoped she'd like.

This was mystifying. But she had grown to be fond of the old chap, and she wanted to keep in his good graces.

What would he have thought had he known that, even while he was phoning, she was waiting for his nephew to come, to take her for a bus ride?

Next morning she walked to work. It was a cool, exuberant morning. As she swung along, she began to feel that some one was keeping pace behind. She turned. The same one took off his hat and hurried to overtake her.

It was Pitt Jepson.

Well, she might have known that she had congratulated herself too soon on having got rid of him. He was the sort of person who must thrash out a grievance, and he hadn't walked a block with her before she saw that his vanity had never ceased to smart since that night of his rebuff. By the untruthful road of a further apology, he wanted to show her that she was wrong in her judgment.

"I couldn't tell you in a note just how I regretted what happened that night," he started out ponderously.

Barry walked on businesslike, very fast, letting him have his discourse in a monologue. At first he was gratified; he thought she was listening judiciously. He was abundant in self-accusation. He even—on the hint he had taken from Mal—dished up a sort of distress over what she must have suffered at his hands, but that point was as nothing to the distress of pride he felt himself suffering at hers, now.

Gradually it dawned on him that her silence was not as approving as he fancied. He began to halt somewhat. Then she spoke.

"Why didn't you let it drop? I apologized, Mr. Jepson, for thinking you were something you weren't. I don't see what more I can do, do you? And I thought my note would make that plain."

He reddened.

"I thought you had a generous nature," he said, "and that when you saw how I feel— But maybe I've felt

too much. Maybe I've overrated what I did. Maybe I have old-fashioned notions of what a young woman ought to be offended about."

"What?" she said blankly.

"Young women who live around alone in great cities and pick up all sorts of friends and make promiscuous contacts— This is a modern world, of course, and my ideals may be out of date. If that's the trouble, I apologize, humbly."

Until he had hit out on this tack, she had been half listening to him and half figuring out why she had ever had that ridiculous hallucination about him when she had first met him.

"It was his nose!" she had finally decided. "I see that now. It was his fine, outstanding nose. It's the most stunning nose I ever did see, and I thought he was like it, a sort of Don Quixote. Heavens!" And she smiled. It was that smile that had cut short his discourse and made him uneasy.

His last words took the smile out of her. She drew up, and there was in her glance much of the anger that had disconcerted him that night. Then all at once she began to laugh.

"It all comes of having a dual nature," she said gayly. "To have one self saying, 'I dare you!' and the other saying, 'Don't!'—yes, that's terrible. And when there's a little imp down inside, rooting for the joy of living—ah, that's what makes all the trouble."

He mistook her.

"You didn't say that, that night. You pretended you had only one nature. How was I to know?"

Then he saw that she was really angry. He lost his temper.

"It's hard to understand you. You take everything I say wrong. Yet you talk about the joy of living. The joy of living doesn't bother you so much when you share it with a married man."

Barry stopped in her tracks. She stared long at him, and he did not know

that the good, strong muscles in her round arms were twitching with a primitive and overpowering longing.

Then, once more, she laughed.

"There's a saying about cutting off your nose to spite your face. But your face spites your nose—all the whole of you spites it. And what a pity, for it's the one human thing about you! Poor nose! It might have done things, but there's the rest of you attached to it and it's hopeless. Poor, poor nose!"

"A wonderful joke, doubtless!" he managed to say, white to the lips.

She waved her hand, laughing with unforgettable derision.

"Seeing the joke keeps us from hating, sometimes." And she left him.

He would never know in the very least what she meant.

But when she had gone some distance, she stopped again, for all at once she realized something. And that thought struck everything else from her mind. It was a stern Barry who set about her work that morning.

Toward noon Mallory started downtown. He had never taken her to lunch yet, but he had spoken of it last night. Now he couldn't wait for another day. He didn't phone; he thought he would just drop in. He knew that Lee Amber's absence kept her very busy.

He found her in Amber's private office, sitting with her chin in her hands, staring at nothing.

At sight of him, she pushed herself a little from the desk and regarded him silently. He came forward impulsively.

"I thought maybe you could come today to lunch—can you?"

"I can't, thanks. Some one else——"

"Oh!" he blatted out. "Well, I might have guessed. I'm awfully disappointed, just the same." Then he brightened. "Perhaps to-morrow?"

She got up from the desk, and he fancied that she looked at him oddly.

"I'm afraid not."

"Well—when?" And as she did not answer, "Is anything wrong? Oh, is something wrong?"

"Yes," she said frankly. "And I want to ask you something." He was now as sober as she. "Answer me, please, just as plainly as—just as you'd want any one else to answer you. Of course you knew of the friendship between Mr. Amber and me?"

At Amber's name, Mal's solemnity surpassed hers.

"Yes. You intimated——"

"Did you think that maybe it was—something more than friendship? Frankly, now."

After a pause he said:

"Yes, I did."

"And at the same time, you suppose he's a married man?"

A deep flush spread over his face.

"I—I knew his wife—that is, I knew her brother. But why——"

She stopped him. She stood looking at the floor.

"Lee Amber has been divorced for three months."

In the silence, one might almost have heard the red hue clambering to Mallory's very hair. Then he found sudden stammering speech.

"Oh—but you mustn't think—— Oh, Barry, don't, *don't* think that I——"

"I don't think—I know," she broke in. "And don't lie about it. It's not like you and it doesn't deceive me. You thought I was more or less intimate with a married man—and I found it out from your friend the Puritan, this morning. He didn't see why *his* attentions insulted me, when I shared the joy of living with a married man! Oh, I don't put you in his class. You aren't a prig hypocrite. But the effect is the same—the old, old, same thing! Don't say you didn't judge me or think anything wrong, because if you didn't, it was because you wouldn't let yourself. Oh, the prig was right! 'A girl on her own,' he said, 'making promiscuous

contacts'— Oh, you thought just what he thought, even if you excused it! You thought it! Oh, Mallory!"

She turned away. He was just going to her, tumultuous with protest, when a loud, talkative voice was heard in the anteroom. Barry swung around.

"There! It's he!" She darted to the door and opened it an inch or two. "All right, Mr. Peerpe. Wait just a minute, won't you?" She shut the door and stood against it, staring at Mallory. "Now the cat's out of the bag. The person I'm going to lunch with is your own uncle, Mr. Peerpe. Yes, you may well look thunderstruck! But it's very simple. We got acquainted one day lately in the churchyard, and he's sort of taken a fancy to me. I didn't know till the other day, of course, about you and him. And I didn't want to interfere. But he needn't see you here. I'd rather he didn't, please. If you'll step in there—" And she showed him the little lavatory that opened from the office.

As he stood stock-still, she pushed him toward it.

"Please! And don't wait for me. Please go away. I'll see you once more some other time. Not to-day."

"I'll go in, but I shall wait till you come back. I've got to explain— Barry dear, listen! I *must* tell you— there's something I must tell you, and you must listen, Barry!"

She shook her head and at the same time thrust him farther within the little compartment and shut the door of it. Then she went to the other door, and called:

"Come in, Mr. Peerpe."

Mr. Peerpe entered. His entrance was remarkable, inasmuch as there was something burstingly triumphant in his little, energetic steps. He was far too much occupied with himself to notice her flurried manner and pale face.

"Ah, Miss Olliver! I'm a bit early, but there's a reason." He swelled his

chest out and beamed at her craftily. "I've something to tell you, and I dare say you'll better guess what it is."

Barry, trying to adjust herself to this situation, smiled a little.

"Well, sir, am I to try to guess? Maybe you'd better tell me."

"I dare say. I've been making an investment. A successful one, I have reason to believe."

"Well, sir, won't you tell me?"

"Yes. I was going to tell you while we were at lunch, but it's so quiet here and we're alone—"

He sat down, making excited, quick taps on the floor with his cane.

"Well," he went on, "I've decided that I can't live with nothing to do, so I've gone in for something—something *you'll* be interested in. In fact, you're the originator of it, and you'll be a part of it, a guiding part. Now can you guess?"

"I a guiding part? I'm afraid, sir, I don't see."

"Well, you suggested it, and I shall build it. You are to see your dream realized. In short, we're going to have that get-wellery for working girls."

She gasped. He chuckled and tapped vigorously.

"Yes, just that. You see, I knew Rawlinson pretty well."

"Rawlinson?" cried Barry.

"Yes. Mind, I didn't say a word when his executor offered the place to Amber, because I would *not* have the boy-farm people get it, but just the same it was an underhand trick, and so I told Amber in my letter." Barry started. "And, after all, Amber wanted it for selfish reasons, whereas Rawlinson meant it to go for good purposes. Well, what's a better purpose than a place for young women in industry to get well in?"

"Do you mean to say, sir, that you expect to buy that Mount Royal estate?"

"I've bought it." He watched her



triumphantly. "Ah, you're surprised, naturally. And of course Amber is furious. In fact, his letter was so abusive, I see my first estimate of him was wrong. I'd not care to have him as a neighbor at all. It made me go straight to Bancroft and threaten him with exposure of maladversion of moneys in trust. And he yielded at once, and the land is mine, at the original price, too. Of course Amber told me to find some other land, but this is ideal for the get-wellery, and I told him so. He can look elsewhere. He's a younger man, he has more time, and, anyhow, the place can't be built too soon. Even now some young lady may die for lack of a place to go and get well in. So, you see, you'll have your hands full, Miss Olliver." And he sat back and glowed at her through his spectacles.

But the anticipated response did not come. Indeed, her gaze disconcerted him.

"Why, what's the matter? Is something wrong?" he asked.

At these words, which Mal had uttered so recently, she flung out her arms.

"Wrong?" she cried, in loud, frank emphasis. "Good God!"

"Why, Miss Olliver! What in the world! For goodness' sake, explain yourself! What have I done?"

"Done, sir?" She wanted to laugh hysterically. "Why, your taking this land, and this idea of yours about a get-wellery——"

"Idea of mine, Miss Olliver?"

"Oh, but I didn't mean—— Why, it was just a dream, a fancy, an impulse!"

"But don't you believe in it?" He was pathetically at sea. As she was silent, he plunged into an insistent harangue. He understood her modesty, her fear of a new responsibility, but he knew her talents better than she—— She cut him short by a hysterical noise that was only partly a laugh.

"You men! You young men and old

men, rich and poor, prudes and——everything! Because a girl is alone, she's made for your gratification, one way or another! I'm not ungrateful, Mr. Peerpe, and after all, it is splendid of you—but I won't be bribed! I *won't* be bribed!"

"Bribed?"

"Yes, yes, yes, bribery! That's it, with every one of you. Mr. Peerpe, all my life men have wanted to own me, to own my feelings and actions and time. Even when they wanted to marry me, it was to own me. Lee Amber—for all he says not—why, this land, he was bribing me with it, this same tiresome, eternal land! And, sir, I'm just a whim of yours. You quarreled with your nephew, and you want me to take his place, because you want some one to manage. I ought to have known. But I suppose all my life I'll go on expecting something else and getting stung. And not ten minutes ago——" She broke off and went to the lavatory door and opened it. "You might as well, Mallory."

Mallory came out and stood looking from her to his uncle.

Mr. Peerpe's bright glasses seemed to go opaque. He rose slowly, and his compact little bosom might be said to have ticked, like an excited sort of clock. He was launching some grandiose exclamation, but Barry interrupted him.

"Mr. Peerpe, he didn't know, either, till just now. He didn't know I'd ever laid eyes on you. And I didn't say anything to either of you, because I was trying to think up some way of bringing you together——well, yes, reconciling you. But you can fix that up for yourselves now. I'm through." She half stopped, as if the next thought were as appalling as it was unexpected. "*I'm through with men!*"

And she caught up her hat and pocketbook and inexorably vanished.

"Do I understand you to say you didn't know this young lady knew me—that she didn't know you were my —" Mr. Peerpe stopped just before he said the word.

"She told you that herself, sir."

They were on the street. Mr. Peerpe was still rosy with immense indignation.

"Then you couldn't have turned her against me. Inconceivably as the young ingrate has treated me, I don't think she'd lie."

"As usual, sir, your opinions are generous."

"Now, young man, please tell me what I ask you, without the disrespect you take such strange pleasure in. I'm to understand your low views and actions have offended this young—person?"

"Yes, sir, she was as angry with me as with you."

"Have you any consciousness of the form of your offense?"

"I have, sir. I'm deeply, profoundly, madly—I love her, sir. I loved her the first time I met her, and I've thought of little else since."

"Hah! Well, I don't blame her for rejecting your attentions. While I shall never forgive that young woman, at least I bear her no low grudge, and I'm glad she has escaped any reciprocation of your feelings. Yes, even if she marries that Amber. And she may, who knows?"

At this, Mal turned on his uncle. He was pale.

"Uncle Elihu, you hate me, and you're welcome to all your mean, spiteful thoughts of me, but you needn't taunt me about Amber. If I love her, it's the biggest, finest thing in me, and you might respect it if nothing else. And don't you be so sure about her marrying Amber. I'm not going to give up like that. I'll fight for her, sir, till there's not a breath left in me. So just understand that, if you please."

"A pauper like you? You'd drag her to your level?"

Mal turned paler. Then he controlled himself. He drew himself up, and with a shade at least of his natural energy and exuberance, he laughed in Mr. Peerpe's face.

Mr. Peerpe's eyes glinted strangely behind their spectacles.

## CHAPTER XVII.

On the day after her scene with Mallory and his uncle, Barry had taken care to have a lunch companion. As she expected, Mallory was in the lower hall, hoping to intercept her. But, reinforced by the other young woman, who was a stout and determined person, she merely nodded to him and passed out. He did not attempt to follow.

Of Mr. Peerpe she heard nothing.

Next morning a note came from Mallory to the office.

"I went to the club to find you. So you are avoiding me—are you, really? Do you mean you won't give me a chance? But I intend to make my chance. To-night I'm called out of town on business. But when I come back—don't think I'll give up. I shall come to you the moment I reach town."

She put the letter away firmly, and went resolutely to work.

Whatever Lee Amber may have intended to say to her about her friend, Mr. Peerpe, he did not say it. When he returned and found her in a state of hostility with both uncle and, evidently, nephew, he was tactfully silent. He seemed to have decided to take the loss of the land philosophically, and he plunged into his work, which he must set in order before his big trip West, which was to come off in two weeks.

This period marked a triumph for him. Every day Barry wondered anew at him. He delayed the great question, never speaking of it—in words. She was exceedingly grateful because, while she felt that she was going to marry him, somehow she wasn't yet

prepared to give the actual answer, and he seemed to appreciate her attitude, and to respect it.

Nevertheless, she grew nervous. Even when she felt that she was seeing how completely he was suited to be her mate, she would be seized by an unaccountable restlessness. Marriage! Was she ready for that tremendous experience? There was a thing that called for ideals! And his first wife had failed him. Well, that only put the more responsibility on his second. No woman had the right to bring disaster on him a second time.

Meantime, the scenic booklets kept coming. The magazines, too, were putting out travel articles. She looked them over greedily. She dreamed of mountains and Yosemite and Grand Cañons at night.

One very warm morning, he found her with this *wanderlust* in her eyes, as she turned the pages of a beautifully illustrated article. He leaned over her to see the pictures. He put his hand on hers, and she looked up at him, laughing and excited. She felt his love flood over her like a wave. It was marvelous that he controlled himself, but he went on to the outer office.

She turned more leaves of the magazine. All at once she exclaimed. Before her was a poem. It was by Malory Crothers.

It was not about mountains. It was about mankind, and the work to be done therefor.

That evening she bought a copy of the magazine and sent it, marked, to Mr. Peerpe.

Shortly before noon of the next day, Mr. Peerpe phoned to her. He must have come at once to town. He asked her to meet him in Trinity yard.

Her anger at him had mostly evaporated, and she was now somewhat ashamed of the way she had talked to him that day, and wanted to tell him so.

"Well, well," he said, as they walked about the paths, "I knew you weren't a young woman to treasure up bad feelings. But you were pretty short with me, and it took me by surprise."

"I wasn't quite myself, sir—and something had taken *me* by surprise, too. But I do want you to think I'm not ungrateful."

"Well, well, let that pass. I was to blame somewhat, too. But tell me, now, about this magazine. Why did you send me my nephew's poem?"

"Because it's a fine poem, sir, and I thought it would show you what he wants to do in the world."

"H'm! But have you made up with him?"

"I've not seen him. I believe he's away."

"But in your heart you've forgiven him, hey?"

"Oh—forgive? I hate that word, sir." She looked at him mischievously. "Is that what *you've* been doing—forgiving him?"

"I?" Mr. Peerpe drew himself up. "I forgive that scamp?"

"I'm glad you see it that way," she said quickly. "It's for you to beg his pardon, really, isn't it?"

His jaw dropped down.

"What did you say, Miss Olliver?"

"Yes, sir. After all, you fell out with him because he's just like you. He has strength of character to live his own life. It took strength. I happen to know that he was very fond of you, and he misses you. It was as hard for him to lose you as it was for you to lose him."

"You side with him against me, do you? Well, I see your quarrel hasn't lasted, and you'll think whatever he tells you. And, of course, you'll be marrying him."

"What?"

"He tells me he expects to marry you."

She flared around at him.



"This had to be. It was you and I—always. It's always got to be so, my darling."

"Marry me? He told you he was going to marry me?"

"He said—well, practically that. He said as long as there was a breath in his body——"

Barry stopped in the path.

"Mr. Peerpe, I'm going to marry Mr. Amber. And we're going away at the end of the week."

The little old gentleman turned slowly toward her. She saw dismay gather upon his face.

"Amber?" he said, with difficulty, as if his breathing had been affected. "Amber? Do I hear you aright? Did you say Amber?"

"Yes, sir."

"You mean—it is arranged? You have actually given yourself to him?"

"Well—virtually. He loves me, Mr. Peerpe."

"And you love him?"

"Certainly. He is wonderful and strong and——"

"Strong—yes, indeed! Strong-tempered! He'll never forget his grudge about that land. He'll forbid you to see me. But do you mean you have actually promised to be his wife?"

"You must excuse me from discussing this any further, sir," she said proudly. "But you can see that your nephew's claims were not very well founded. You might tell him so if you see him."

Mr. Peerpe frowned up at the spire of Trinity as if it were an accomplice in the general plot to baffle him.

"I don't think you love this fellow at all. He has been tempting you with his money."

"I think I'll be going now, Mr. Peerpe. It's quite time." She held out her hand. "Thank you for all your kindness and—the get-wellery. Good-by, Mr. Peerpe."

He waved aside her hand with his cane.

"Hoity-toity!" he said and, turning, walked off rapidly toward the subway kiosk.

She stared after him. Then she shook her head.

"Marry me! He said that!"

#### CHAPTER XVIII.

"Now, Mallory, why do you suppose I sent for you?"

"I haven't an idea, Uncle Elihu. Probably to quarrel with me."

"I want to speak of Miss Olliver. And there's no time to lose."

"Barry?" cried Mal, electrified. "What of her?"

"Now, don't hurry me. *Do* you love that young lady?"

"I told you that, sir."

"Well, then, I saw her this morning. She told me she is going to marry Amber—that they're going away at the end of the week."

Mal sprang to his feet.

"She told you that?"

"She did. But she did *not* say she had actually promised herself to him. I even gathered that she had not—"

"Amber? Marry *Amber*? But she said she was through with men!"

"She's a woman, Mallory. Now, mind, I don't know her feelings for you, but she's not so angry as you may think. She sent me a poem of yours, and in fact just now she said some very nice things about you. I'm an old man, many years a widower, but something tells me that she may not really love this Amber."

Mal was pacing about like a wild beast.

"I've got to see her!"

He snatched up his hat. Mr. Peerpe intercepted him.

"What are you going to say?"

"That I love her! Don't keep me, sir. Every moment may mean—"

"But you mean to ask her to marry you?"

"Good God, sir, what else?"

"But you're penniless."

"Maybe she'd wait—"

"Now, Mallory, listen to me!"

"No, sir. Thank you, but—"

"There, he's gone! He never *would* listen to me!" Mr. Peerpe paced his rug nervously. "Win her, you self-willed boy, win her!" Suddenly he opened a drawer and took out the deeds for the Mount Royal place. And all at once, godless though he was, he felt the need of spiritual reinforcement. "Rawlinson," he invoked, "help the young scamp to win her, and they shall have your land between them, for working girls or damned orphan boys—or both!"

#### CHAPTER XIX.

"Well, that deal's through, all right!"

Lee was jingling things in his pockets, sure sign that he was pleased. The deal was the tremendous drive he had been making since his return. "Now the rest's easy. It'll keep me busy, but—" He was standing beside Barry. He came a little closer. "Well, girl, how about us going to dinner to-night?"

They had not been out together since his return. She saw now that the time had come. To-night, at dinner, he would ask.

"Yes, Lee—all right."

"H'm? All right?" His voice had a deep, dreamy timbre. She dared not look up at him. There was a silence. "Well, I'll be busy around here till six. Will you wait or—"

"Yes, I'll wait for you. No use going up to the club."

After another silence, he walked slowly away.

It was then about half past four. She had work to do till five.

She had, then, perhaps two hours left.

It had always been her boast that she would never have a regulation wedding, with a trousseau and invitations and all that. Her idea of being married, she had said, was to grab up some smart traveling togs—especially strong boots and pockety coats and little hats—to drop in at City Hall with her man, and, after the civic ceremony, catch a train from the Pennsylvania Station. It must be the Pennsylvania.

Lee was familiar with this notion of hers, and evidently he was logically acting on it. If he—if they left on Saturday night, that would give her three days to grab the togs. A thrill went through her. She saw herself at the station.

Then she saw—not the station at all, with its vast, vaulted spaces, where the trains went out—but a great, mysterious, massive stone gate, studded with iron nails and clamped with steel bolts. At the base of this huge barrier, a small, square doorway pierced the thickness of the stone, and about to go through it were she and Lee and one other. This other tried to go into the doorway with them, but she couldn't manage it. Sur-reptitiously Barry tried to smuggle her through, but Lee wouldn't make way, and so, he going through and taking Barry with him, this other one was left behind. And the door shut. And the left-behind one stood alone outside and trembled.

The left-behind one was the Barry she now was. The one who went through was the Barry who was Lee's wife, who would never see this Barry again.

There was a knock at the door, an

imperative knock, and something in her leaped at the chance of even a momentary distraction.

"Come in!" she called.

It was Mallory.

She had hardly got back her breath before he was standing over her, half smiling down in his whimsical way. But he was pale, and the paleness, and something tense and determined about him, made her understand that he knew, and that he was there because he knew. He looked down at her for a long moment. She said nothing.

"Barry, have you promised to marry Amber?"

There was a long silence. All at once, she buried her face in her hands.

"Go away, Mallory! You *must* go away! This is no time for you to be here! Oh, do go, Mallory! If you *are* my friend——"

"Yes," he said; "yes, I'm that, Barry." He sat down by her. "But tell me, won't you, what I asked? Barry?"

She lifted her head. She was pale now.

"I couldn't go back now. He hasn't a doubt about my answer. It's come before I was ready, but I can't go back on it now. He loves me, Mallory. I've accepted all that big love, and—— You see it, you understand. If I've a vestige of honor—— You must see!"

"Then you *haven't*—yet!" He took her hands. "But I love you, too. I love you just as much, though I haven't had so much time to make you love me. But do you love *him*? Do you?"

"You've no right to ask, Mallory."

"Perhaps. But still I do ask. Anyhow, I think you need to tell some one. Isn't that so?"

"I'm afraid—— Oh, it's so difficult! I thought I did! He's so wonderful. I do admire him so much, so very much, Mallory! And the other will come. You see, he knows that's how I feel about it."



"Yes, you feel that way, but are you sure?"

"But it must."

He sprang up.

"This is all wrong, Barry, dead wrong! Why shouldn't he give you more time? And why shouldn't you give *me* my time? Barry, I love you! Oh, my dear! And how long have you known me? Two or three weeks, against his two or three years. I must have *my* chance. You can't go and do this irrevocable thing. Why, dear, you and I—it's you and I that were meant for each other. Haven't you felt it, too, ever since that first night we went together—"

"No, no, Mallory, you mustn't! I can't do it again—keep him waiting, put him off again. He has every right now to expect— And this terrible juggling with feelings, with a man's love and hopes—no, I can't do all that again. I must end it. I despise myself even now for this wavering."

"But why did you waver? And how about me? Tell me, honestly—no, I mean tell yourself—weren't you surer of your feelings for him before you and I—"

"Mallory! Don't!"

"But I just want you to face things. If you marry him and the love doesn't come, is that any more honorable than to let him know the truth now? Is it any more merciful to him?"

She put out her hands. He took them. She broke into sobs.

"This had to be. It was you and I—always. It's always got to be so—my darling."

With a swift, strong movement, she flung up her arm around his neck.

"I know! Oh, I know!"

Something clattered.

Lee had dropped a ledger on the table.

Just once before Barry had seen him white, almost as white as he was now.

"I ought to have guessed—about

you." He was looking at Mal. "I did guess, too. You think, do you, you're going to take my girl away from me?"

"Lee!"

"Never mind, Barry. I've got something to say. He stepped nearer to Mal. "This girl has given herself to *me*. And you know her—you know she doesn't lie."

"Yes, I do know her. I know she's big enough for the truth. She has not given herself to you."

"If she doesn't marry me, now, she's been living a lie for three months."

"May *be*. To herself. Not to you. There's a difference."

They stared at each other. Lee's mouth was twitching. He even laughed, shortly.

"If you think you can get her, you're a damn fool."

Mal's eyes narrowed.

"I'd hate to turn this into a cheap fisticuff affair, but cut out the 'damn fool.' It's not complimentary to her, for she's already told me she loves me."

"You lie."

"Lee! You've got to listen! Don't—don't make it like this! You must listen to me—"

"All right." He turned to her. "How much truth is there in what he said just now?"

For a moment she had to look away.

"Well, then—it was all true."

"You—you say that, do you?"

"Lee, I've treated you horribly, wickedly! But I didn't know! Lee, I *didn't* know! I like you so—I'd grown to know you so well—you've been so splendid— Oh, it's terrible, but I just mistook it all! I thought it was love—or near it, so that love would come. And then *he*— And even then I didn't know! Not till just now! Do you think I'd have— Oh, Lee!"

He drew back.

"You mean—you mean I'm to understand that you—" She sank down at the desk. He went and stood over

her. "Barry," he said softly, "you don't mean *that*. You couldn't mean that. Look up at me, girl. Look up like you always do. Barry."

She shook her head.

"I've told you. It's so."

Mal came beside her and just laid his hand on hers. She gave a little sob. Then she controlled herself. She looked up quickly, where Lee stood without moving. She went to him.

"Lee, I know you better than you know yourself. I know you do care for me, and I know you're a big man. Your heart is big. You know how ashamed I am, and that I didn't understand. You'll know that it would be terrible if you did anything that took away your friendship from me. It's been something too splendid to lose."

"Yes, too splendid!" he repeated gently. "And so you're the girl I've been knowing all this time! You're my girl, my Barry! The girl in a thousand—in ten thousand!" He laughed savagely. "As if there *was* one! As if even you could be different! But I knew! Yes, when he first came here that morning, I guessed. But I put it away. All the time you've been playing him along with me——"

"Lee!" she cried sharply. "Don't—don't in your excitement—don't say things you'll regret! I don't blame you for turning against me just now, but don't say things to turn me against you! Stay my friend, Lee! I want you for a friend!"

"You want everything without giving anything. Oh, blind idiot that I was! As if it could have been any other way! Because he has family and manners and education—all the things I haven't got—I might have known! But I thought I could learn all those fine things from you. I thought we'd learn together. But you've got the real stuff all ready-made, and you're a woman. And when you've said one woman, you've said all of them.

There's no difference. Well, take your educated, cultured, poem-writing lover! I had a dream, and it's over. It's what men deserve for dreaming."

Mallory had turned away. There was something shameful in the man's self-exposure. But Barry was staring with wide eyes.

"What? Ah! I see! I see!"

In a flash, she *had* seen the completeness of his selfish possessiveness, the primitive male's savagery at losing what he believed was his. He had not given a thought to her; he had not believed a word of her shame and distress. And, at losing her, he threw away his flimsy faith in her, because he chose to think all women were alike. That was his idea of how he could endure the disappointment. It was the only way, for him.

"Lee," she said suddenly, and with great clearness, "you never loved me! You loved the thought of owning me! It's my fault. I should have seen. We've been saved from a horrible mistake. Try to be grateful. *I am!*"

Barry and Mallory were walking up Broadway. It was quiet, with the quiet of Saturday evening, and stretched out for miles ahead of them, till it made an elbow at old Grace Church.

"It goes on and on, miles and miles—this old street!" said Barry. "This old trail! It's like looking into our future. There's no big stone barrier across the path. It just goes and goes."

He drew her partly within a great, deserted doorway.

"And you didn't know till now?"

"That's what so queer, Mallory—that I didn't know. I'm not very discerning, after all. I'm a much humbler Barry than the one you met a few weeks ago."

"And I never was humble till now," he said, drawing her to him proudly.

"Mallory!"

"Barry!"

# Living up to Fuzzy

By Burges Johnson

Author of "Pleasant Tragedies of Childhood," "Bashful Ballads," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY R. VAN BUREN

**The tale of a fur overcoat and the virtue of economy. Peter is such a likable young man, and his self-made uncle is such a faker, that you will like especially the way the story turns out.**

UNCLE HIRAM loaded his fork amidships with its final brimming cargo of white meat; stowed upon it a deckload of potato and giblet gravy; then, using his knife as a sort of mason's trowel, shoveled up the last bits of mashed turnip and cranberry, and deftly patted them here and there upon the load, rounding the whole off smoothly so that no loss should occur in transit.

Peter followed this operation with fascinated eyes, just as he had watched it at preceding annual dinners as far back as he could remember. It was at this point that Uncle Hiram usually arose and took from the sideboard a small Christmas gift which he placed solemnly before his nephew. Aunt Rebecca would then discover in her lap some knitted token, a scarf or pair of wristlets, which she would shyly offer. And Peter regularly produced from his own pockets two keepsakes such as his slender means could afford.

But on this particular Sunday, the traditional routine was broken. Uncle Hiram remained settled in his chair, combing with his fingers the fringe of whiskers that adorned the lower half of his seamed and sun-baked countenance, while he surveyed his nephew quizzically through half-shut eyes.

"Did ye smoke that sterling-silver-mounted pipe I give ye last Christmas?" he asked, after a moment or two of this scrutiny.

"Why, no, Uncle Hiram, I didn't," said Peter frankly. "I laid it by for a time, but I value it highly."

"Humph!" said Uncle Hiram. "Smoke cigareets, or don't you smoke at all, mebbe?"

"Why, yes, I smoke an old pipe now and then, and I like cigars, but I can't afford good ones," and Peter laughed cheerfully.

"Ain't had any raise, I suspect, sence last Christmas, hev ye? Can't buy many perfectos on what you git from Pease's store, I guess," and Uncle Hiram haw-hawed uproariously. "Why don't ye chaw tobacco?" he inquired, interrupting his own mirth. "I 'most wish ye chawed," he added, half plaintively.

"Why, Hiram!" said Aunt Rebecca, faintly protesting.

"Shet up, ma!" said Uncle Hiram. The phrase was a formula with him, applicable to every remark from the opposite end of the table. "I jest thought," he continued to his nephew, "thet when I was your age I chawed, an' it never seemed to do me no harm. But then I was considerable tougher'n you be, an' I was gittin' a man's wages. I'm payin' my stenographer more'n old Pease gives you right now, I dare say."

Peter flushed. He had his uncle's round, full face and blue eyes, but the absence of tan and wrinkles and fringe of whisker gave him a gentle, childlike



"Here ye be, Peter," said Uncle Hiram. "Merry Christmas! Appearances git half the business, so I'm givin' ye this fur coat fer a real start."

appearance that was not justified by his years. Uncle Hiram watched him narrowly.

"Ain't mad, be ye?" said the old man, with apparent anxiety.

Peter laughed.

"No, indeed," he said. "There was nothing to be angry at."

After all, why should he let the crotchety old fellow get under his skin? They were together on equal terms at these yearly meetings. Peter lived on what he himself earned, however little it was, and owed nothing to his uncle's charity, or even to his business name.

"No, of course they wa'n't anythin' to git mad at," said Uncle Hiram, with just a shade of disappointment in his voice. "I do pay my stenographer a sight of money, but she's wuth it. She runs my business. I'd ruther lose my right hand than her. Howsomever, I had considerable temper when I was your age, an' I didn't know but——"

The balance of his meditation was completely muffled in pudding.

As he saw the last barge of dessert sail safely into port, Peter was in a quandary over the two formal little Christmas gifts that lay concealed in his pockets. The exchange of compliments had always in

former years had its set place in the order of the dinner. But now his uncle rose abruptly, and with a ponderous wink at Aunt Rebecca stepped out of the room, returning almost immediately with a luxuriant and most expensive-looking mass of fur in his arms.

"Here ye be, Peter," said Uncle Hiram. "Merry Christmas! Ye're twenty-one now, an' I wanted ye should git a real start. Appearances git half the business, so I'm givin' ye this fur coat fer a Christmas present. Ye ain't gittin' along very fast with yer employer, an' seein' as I'm yer only blood relation, I wanted to do some-

thin' fer ye. It set me back a sight of money, I kin tell ye."

Peter was strongly tempted to blurt out a preference for the fortune that had been spent upon the gift, but it never was easy to disagree with Uncle Hiram, and in this case there was the possibility that the old man might be right. As far back as any one could remember, Hiram Hubbell had always worn a mangy gray fur coat throughout the cold winter months; and certainly he had won unquestioned business success. How was one to know which possession had produced the other?

"Better leave yer old coat here till I kin send it to ye," Uncle Hiram growled, as his nephew was leaving. "If I don't start ye wearin' this one, ye'll put it in moth balls. Ye're as cautious as yer father was. Ye never got it from my side; that's sure."

Peter repressed his irritation, as he had often done before, with the thought that the old man was his host and his only relative, and crotchety by nature. So he laughed again, kissed Aunt Rebecca, and started down the street, feeling a certain pleasurable embarrassment in his ostentatious finery. Sur-reptitiously he stroked the fur.

"Good old Fuzzy, I'll be a kind master to you."

Coming out of North Station, the cabbies bothered him. It had never happened before, and he enjoyed it. He tried saying, "Not to-night, boys," in a condescending tone to a group of them, and it sounded well. "Not to-night, my boy," he found himself repeating experimentally, from time to time, to some attentive lamp-post as he passed it.

Strolling into the first tobacco shop on Portland Street, he idly studied the five-cent end of the counter. The clerk stood deferentially at the other end and set out two open boxes invitingly. Peter moved half the way toward him

and saw the price labels: "Twenty-five cents" and "Three for fifty cents." Stammering, he explained that a smaller cigar was his custom at that hour. Desperately he moved to the ten-cent section, while the clerk reached toward the gilded shelves behind. Fuzzy was exacting her first tribute.

Was it Peter's imagination, or was it a fact that passers-by deigned him more than a casual glance? Young women, especially, seemed to acknowledge his existence with bright eyes in a way he felt sure he had never experienced before. He strolled with an unaccustomed jauntiness, and finally with an assurance that was but partially disturbed by a belated and persistent bootblack.

But as he drew near his boarding house, he felt a certain premonitory uneasiness. Mrs. Skinner was a landlady of the motherly type, who undoubtedly read his post cards and always liked to know where he was going when he went out. Though the neighborhood of her house was far from elegant, Peter's room was bright and spacious, and he was comfortable at six dollars a week. Yet for the first time, he felt his finery to be incongruous and perhaps inconvenient.

Mrs. Skinner let Peter in. Her room opened out of the front hall and she heard his key at the latch.

"Why, Mr. Tuttle," she said, "how perfectly elegant you look! Was it Santy Claus or a rich old aunt?" and she laughed, but he saw in her darting little eyes that she really meant to know sooner or later.

Peter laughed back in avoidance of her question. She had guessed close enough, but he did not intend to tell her so. Uncle Hiram was a cherished secret.

Christmas Monday was a bad day, and it began badly. In the first place, Peter got up sneezing. His nose had tickled ever since he had first donned

that coat, and now beyond question he owed it an attack of hay fever. At breakfast time, he brought it down and hung it in the hall. Fellow boarders, who came downstairs later, stopped outside the dining room, and Peter knew that they were looking it over. After breakfast, one of them followed him out and held the fuzzy harbinger of prosperity while he explained a need of three dollars till next Friday; the apologetic refusal was taken as a sort of personal insult.

On the way to the store, at least three bootblacks pestered Peter. It was plain that his shoes did not match his coat; nor did his rusty soft hat, for that matter. He got a shine, mentally charging ten cents more to Fuzzy, and it made him late to the store.

Mr. Pease happened to be near the door when Peter came in. He was a large, pudgy man with watery eyes, whose ready fits of temper were often concealed by an unctuous tone and a look of vicarious sorrow. But evidently this morning surprise drove any other feeling out of him.

"Waal, Peter," he said, "ye're late. And ye look quite the swell. Wholesale grocery must seem humble quarters."

Peter muttered an excuse in which he jumbled together the words "holiday season"—"breakfast"—"trolley blockade," and made for the warehouses. Mr. Pease followed, talking softly:

"That's an elegant coat, Peter. But I hope you ain't beginnin' to take too much thought unto yer raiment. Ye said suthin' about trolley cars. I hope you ain't given up walkin', Peter? A young man earnin' only ten dollars a week hed ought to put by his money." Then he added, rather hurriedly: "At your age, I wa'n't gittin' half as much, an' I put by quite a bit."

Peter had not ridden, but he found it hard to say so now. Therefore, he

did the next best thing and said nothing at all.

"Them flour barr'ls, hez got to all come in. They git in the way of other stuff. Who did you say gave ye that coat, Peter?"

"Oh, a friend," said Peter, with an impatience that covered his embarrassment.

Mr. Pease's tone became very sorrowful indeed as he turned back toward his office.

"I allers hoped to hev the confidence of my employees," he said.

At noontime, Peter hurried to his regular lunch room a bit later than usual, and to his great disappointment found that the cause of his haste was not there. For three weeks he had daily shared a table with a most likable young woman in this little restaurant.

The acquaintance had begun when he first had passed her the sugar, and now they chatted together gayly as a matter of course about books and war and picture shows. She was trim and pretty, with a quiet reserve that compelled respect; and though she said that she was a stenographer, she never mentioned her employer or his business, and Peter honored her for it.

Shortly before Christmas, she had agreed that the lunch hour never allowed them time for the completion of a discussion, and she had promised to go to dinner with him—Dutch treat, she insisted—at an interesting little *rôtisserie* near by, on Christmas Monday, if he would ask her mother's permission. He was to meet her here at six and walk home with her, for she, too, lived in the city.

The mirrors in the lunch room reflected the coat impressively from every angle—and also the hat! Peter was startled at the unfitness of it. Fifteen minutes of his lunch hour were left, and on the impulse, he hurried to a cut-price hat shop and bought a brown derby. He had meant to get a black



felt, but the clerk was so deferentially positive. And a newsboy held the door open for him when he went out! Fuzzy was claiming heavy tribute. It meant even slimmer lunches the rest of the week.

It was after six when Peter ended his day's work. He donned the coat as he ran, and before he reached her, he saw Miss Page ahead of him waiting at the appointed corner. It was clear that she did not recognize him until he spoke, and even then she did not smile a greeting. She was plainly startled, for she said in a breathless, frightened little voice:

"Oh, I didn't know—I didn't know!"

"Which way?"

Peter said, loudly "Why can't we go to dinner, anyway, and I'll call on her another night?" and cheerily. He felt very furry and self-conscious, but meant to hide it.

She stammered an answer without meeting his eyes:

"I'm so sorry, but mother has a headache. I ought to have sent you word. I can't go this evening—any time."

She seemed to be looking at his shiny shoes, and he tried to scrape the polish off by rubbing one foot on the other.

"Why can't we go to dinner, anyway, and I'll call on her another night?"

"No. I must be with mother this evening."



"Let me walk along with you, then?"

"No—I must take a car— You mustn't trouble— Good-by."

She was plainly so disturbed, looking to one side and then the other as if wanting to run away, that he could only say good-by and awkwardly lift the brown derby hat. The fact that he was suppressing a sneeze during all of the interview added to his sense of discomfort.

What was the matter? He felt that somehow Fuzzy was to blame, but he could not understand it and went mood-

ily home, late to a boarding-house dinner.

Mrs. Skinner let him in. He found that the boarders were coming out of the dining room or were grouped around the door and the foot of the stairs on the way to their rooms. One or two friendly souls referred teasingly to the coat and hat, but he was too moody and disturbed to answer at all, and was soon alone in the dining room. "Getting stuck up," was a phrase that floated to him from the hall, and he knew that the boarding-house gossips were picking his bones. Before him on the table lay a folded note, hastily written, but clear:

DEAR MR. TUTTLE: I am sure you know that I always got seven dollars a week for your room before you came, and I let you have it for less until you could afford the real price, and gave you every comfort of home also. I must make it seven dollars now, and with your Christmas raise, I am sure you can pay it, or I can let you have the third-floor back at the present figure. Yours sincerely, ESTELLA A. SKINNER.

That night was a miserable one for Peter, half wakeful, half nightmare. If Uncle Hiram had only returned the old coat, Fuzzy might be sold or pawned without a qualm. But no package came in the morning, nor was it at the store when Peter arrived at his work early next day. Mr. Pease came in at eight-thirty and heard his assistant sneezing. He went direct to the warerooms, his face actually funereal.

"Peter," he said, "I've been thinkin' about yer fur coat an' yer manner yis-teddy. An' then thet hat. I hope you come by the money honestly. Ten dollars is generous wages, but it don't support no such finery. I can't hev nobody here gamblin' or leadin' a fast life."

Peter digested the words slowly. His mind may have been dulled by sorrows and a sleepless night. But all at once the meaning seemed to become vividly clear. His head whirled. A flat of eggs was in his hands at the moment.

Hurling it at his employer's feet, he strode over to the coat hooks in the corner. Without a word to Mr. Pease, who stood frozen with surprise, he seized Fuzzy and hurried from the wareroom and the store. He knew where to find Uncle Hiram's Boston place of business, and with head still whirling, he made for it.

There was no boy in the outer office—Uncle Hiram never had one—but a dozen would not have awed Peter as he marched through. He did not even knock at the door marked "private," but flung it open and stepped in for the first time in his life. Even the stenographer in the corner did not embarrass him; he gave her not so much as a thought.

Uncle Hiram looked at him with a mild astonishment that suddenly gave place to some other emotion; the weather-beaten face began to swell and redden in a way that ordinarily betokened a fit of temper. Peter, however, did not allow him a chance to explode first.

"Here's your coat, Uncle Hiram!" he fairly shouted, as he jerked it off. "My boss says I stole it—says no honest young man on ten a week could wear one. It's spoiled a good home for me, got me into debt, and lost the only girl I ever wanted—and me sneezing myself to death! The damn' fuzzy thing!" and Peter threw it across his uncle's desk, while a litter of business papers fluttered protestingly to the floor.

Uncle Hiram sputtered in alarming fashion as he fumbled in his pockets for his spectacles, while the nephew, too angry to care what happened, waited with a strange calmness.

At that moment the door again burst open without a preliminary knock, and a short, sharp-faced man entered, with Mr. Abner Pease pressing close behind him. The short man sized up the tableau with quick, canary-bird eyes. He saw Uncle Hiram still fumbling in his pockets, and the coat across the



The ashes of some old romance seemed to glow again at the stirring.

desk. Quickly he stepped forward and laid a hand on the coat.

"I wouldn't give a ticket for that, if I was you, old man," he said sharply. "It's probably stolen goods."

Uncle Hiram stopped sputtering. He spoke in a voice that he may have once used on the deck aft with the crew all forward in a gale:

"You—you shrimp detective—you sea lawyer—do you think I'm a pawnshop? I gave that lad that coat. Now get off decks before I scrape you off, you barnacle!"

His hand was on the inkwell, and the short man looked wicked for a second—but it was only for a second, while he reappraised the scene. Then he slid quietly out.

Uncle Hiram turned to Mr. Pease, and there was no lowering of his voice.

"Well, Ab," he rumbled, "same old water-logged psalm singer you always was! So you told my nephew a respectable young man on ten a week wouldn't wear a fur coat! I'll just remind you I got my white fur coat at his age, when I was gittin' six a week

from your skinflint old man. I bought it fer two dollars off a drunk seaman off the *Mary Jones* when she made port from her first whalin' v'yage. It made me feel so self-respectin' I told your dad what I thought of him an' quit. I was hopin' the recipe would work again with my nephew."

Mr. Pease reached out his hand in a pacifying gesture each time Uncle Hiram paused for breath, then drew it back again. Now he got a word in:

"Softly, Hiram! I never dreamed Peter was your nephew. I only had his good at heart"—there were actually tears in his eyes at this—"an' I meant to advance him very shortly, very shortly indeed."

"Bilge!" exploded Uncle Hiram. "Why, you leaky old hypocrite, the week after I got my white fur coat you was rigged in one yerself that made you look's if you'd been tarred an' feathered, an' your father was only payin' you five!"

"I know, Hiram, I know. But Henry J. Peabody's coachman pledged it with me fer one dollar an' fifty cents, the time he had to quit an' was lookin' fer a job. Your coat gave you an unfair advantage, you may recollect—an' she chose me, Hiram, she chose me!"

The ashes of some old romance seemed to glow again at the stirring. The two men stood eying each other in their own ways—Uncle Hiram blustering for something more to say, Mr. Pease shifty-eyed and deprecating.

Uncle Hiram broke the silence.

"Waal, Peter," he said, turning to his nephew, "you lost yer temper at me shamefully after I'd gone an' bought ye a first-class coat to show my natural affection. Ye'd better take it back, an' from what I understand, yer job's waitin' with this here paregoric of all the virtues—with a raise o' wages," he added, grinning.

"Very shortly, very shortly indeed," Mr. Pease corrected him nervously.

Peter's anger had cooled a little as he listened curiously to the two old men. But the turn of the talk caused it to flare up again. Never in his life before had he felt so stirred. He seemed to hear himself as another person speaking.

"Go back?" he choked out. "Touch that coat again? I'm sick of you both—natural-born old skinflints! You can both go to the devil!"

He turned on his heel and found himself face to face with Miss Page, standing behind her typewriter. It was the shock of his life. They had all forgotten the stenographer, but as for Peter, he had never suspected her identity. Her cheeks were flushed, and she was looking straight at Uncle Hiram.

"I think you both ought to apologize to Mr. Peter Tuttle," she said clearly. "You've been very unjust to him. You have reproached him for wearing a fur coat on ten dollars a week and you both admit that you wore fur coats at his age on five and six a week. What is more, he had his thrust upon him, and each of you bought yours, though the purchases don't do either of you much credit.

"And as for that coat, Mr. Hubbell," she continued, looking directly at her employer, "it never cost you a cent. You know you got it for a bad debt you had crossed off the books long ago. You both ought to apologize at once."

Peter glanced around at Uncle Hiram, half fearing the inkwell might still be at hand. With astonishment he saw that his uncle's face wore upon its mahogany surface a look of more abashed meekness than the wildest fancy could have thought possible.

"Naow, naow, Miss Page, don't git so het up! Do you happen to know Peter?"

"I do," said Miss Page, more flushed than before, "and I respect him highly."

"By crimps!" said Uncle Hiram. "So do I! I never see him git mad before

an' I never heerd him swear, an' a man can't be successful in the coal business unless he does both. See here, my lad, Hiram Hubbell & Nephew—how does that sound, hey? What say? How'd ye like that?"

"But see here!" Mr. Pease broke in gently. "Peter has a good place, an' very shortly, very shortly indeed——"

"Hey?" roared Uncle Hiram, regaining full voice instantly. "You robber of coachmen, you—you barnacle, get off the deck or I'll scrape you off!"

Mr. Pease backed out crabwise, with

his mollifying hands upstretched, guarding against possible projectiles.

"Thar now!" said Uncle Hiram, sighing like a porpoise. "Come along both of ye an' let's git an ice-cream sody. Jumpin' Jerusalem, Peter, I was always afraid it *sued* ye to work fer that shrimp! Here's yer fur coat, Peter, an' here's an old hat an' office coat to wear under it. Next time ye go on the street in a fur coat, don't wear it with yer white cap an' overalls. I pretty nigh blew out a valve when I see ye come in."

### THE "LIGHT OF OTHER DAYS"—AT VASSAR

THE celebration of Vassar's Jubilee last October naturally brought from her alumnae many stories of the "good old college days." Some of the most amusing are anecdotes of "Henry," an old English gardener who was wont to boast of his long years of faithful service.

"Ah, no hindeed," he is said to have remarked proudly, upon one occasion, "hin twenty year Hi've never been haff the grounds but once. That was to go to a 'anging. Hand I wouldn't 'a gone to that," he added apologetically, "hif it 'adn't a-been a particular friend."

On another occasion, a visiting alumna came out to the garden to greet him, for no return to college in those days was complete without a chat with Henry. He noted that she was in mourning, and found, on inquiring, that she had recently lost her husband. Henry's sympathy was instant and sincere.

"Ah, miss, ah, miss!" he commiserated feelingly. "Hand so 'ard to get hanother!"

Quite as choice and even more illuminating are the tales of the earliest days of all, when the bachelor, Matthew Vassar, equipped each girl's wardrobe with a bootjack and two hooks "one for her best dress and one for her everyday one;" and when the first lady principal sent out her famous circular letter to her prospective charges. In it she described in detail the very modest outfit that each girl was to bring with her and prescribed that no gown should have any trimming at all unless by chance it had been "made over," and it was "found necessary to use a fold or a ruffle in order to cover some piecing or other imperfection!"

What a bid for simplicity!

It was in those days, too, that Matthew Vassar himself drove up one afternoon, at the head of a procession of "hacks," and proudly announced that he had come to take the girls on a "picnic." When the hacks were filled, he preceded them to the cemetery, where he requested his guests to dismount. He had already prepared his own monument, which is in the shape of a huge acorn. Leaning upon this, he said:

"Young ladies, never forget that great oaks from little acorns grow!"

Then he packed them once more into their hacks and led them to his own house, where he served cake and lemonade before their return to college.



"Foh the land sake, judge! Yo' load o' lime  
what you done left backed up in the  
alley is caught afire!"

# Whiter Than Snow

By Mary Eleanor Roberts

Author of "Turkey for Christmas," "The Most Important Thing in the World," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY E. A. FURMAN

THE judge stood on the steps of the Citizens' Republican Club.

It was early in the morning and he wore his overalls. His whitewashing brushes he had left on Saturday night at his place of temporary employment. The judge had breakfasted on pork chops and coffee at a neighboring eating house, and was at peace with all the world.

The Reverend Mr. Mortimer passed, returning from a hurry call to the Mercy Hospital, and the judge saluted with the courtesy of his race.

The young clergyman surveyed the figure on the steps with an abstracted

eye. Then, following the clew of the overalls, his mind awake to the memory of certain domestic details.

"Oh! Ah! Good morning, judge. Glad to see you. By the way, stop around at the house some time to-day, can't you? Mrs. Mortimer says that the cellar needs whitewashing."

"Certainly, sir. Always gratified to oblige Mrs. Mortimer, sir. But to-day I'm engaged to finish Mrs. Bradley's fence. She never hold with havin' it painted. She prefer whitewash."

Mr. Mortimer's brain still struggled with a vague responsibility toward household problems.



"And, oh—do you happen to know of a laundress? I think Mrs. Mortimer said she needed a new one."

The judge, hat in hand, descended the steps.

"Why, I don't know but I *do*. There's Mrs. Blanche Cooley most unexpectedly disengaged. I reckon she could come next Monday, sure. I could stop by at her house this evenin' and ask her to step up to see Mrs. Mortimer."

"I wish you would. And when can you begin the cellar? To-morrow?"

The judge indulged in a huge guffaw.

"For the land's sake, Mr. Mortimer! To-morrow's Election Day!"

"Why, so it is! I forgot. Of course! It's down on my calendar. I'm a watcher as usual. The next day, then?"

The judge considered the question.

"I 'most generally aims to take a holiday the day after election, and Thursday I might be finishin' up Mrs. Bradley, and I don't never hold to be ginnin' a job on Friday, and Saturday's a half day and no good at all. But I could come Monday. You tell Mrs. Mortimer I'll be around next Monday morning."

"Oh, very well!"

The reverend gentleman felt vaguely bewildered by the sense of a missing clew. He knew his way through spiritual labyrinths, but not among the puzzling paths of mundane affairs.

"I've ordered a new load of lime," vouchsafed the judge, "and I'll tell Mrs. Cooley to come to see Mrs. Mortimer. A first-class laundress she is. Just as good as I'm a whitewasher. I'll make that cellar whiter than snow."

"Thanks." The clergyman waved a hand in farewell. "See you to-morrow at the poll."

At the breakfast table Mr. Mortimer related his encounter to his wife:

"And I totally forgot that to-morrow was Election Day until the judge re-

minded me. I shall need some sandwiches, Anne."

Mrs. Mortimer protested for the benefit of the college friend who was visiting her:

"I don't see, Richard, why you will persist in calling that disreputable old darky 'judge.'"

"Because he *is* one, my dear. His title is higher than mine. He's a judge of election and I'm only a minority party watcher. Don't forget the sandwiches."

"No," said his wife with a sigh.

"And I suppose you will want early breakfast if you insist on being at the poll at seven o'clock. Richard has been working for clean politics here for five years," she explained to their guest. "He's appointed a watcher at every election and thinks it his duty to stay at the poll all day. And what good does it do? We're just on the edge of the colored quarter and this is one of the worst divisions in the whole ward. They have repeaters, and false registrations, and they stuff the ballot box if Richard goes away for half an hour. Once he started home for his glasses, but found they were in his pocket and came back, and there was a ballot hanging half out of the box! He has had one or two of the ward workers arrested, but they're always bailed out and they don't seem to bear malice. They always come to Richard to cash the pay roll for them, because he doesn't take a rake-off."

"Oh, come, my dear!" said her husband mildly.

"Clean politics indeed!" sniffed Anne. "It's impossible for one man single-handed to clean up this division, and I wish you'd stop trying."

The friend said that if women only had the vote, things would be different, and that it would be fun to help Anne with the sandwiches.

"We call them minority-party sandwiches," explained Anne the next day,

buttering the loaf. "I make them every election. Richard takes them for lunch, and I send him some dinner on a tray."

"But why do you need so many?" queried the friend, who was slicing tongue.

"Bless you! Richard feeds the whole poll! He sends out for cigars for them, too. Most of the election officers are colored men, and they're wretchedly poor."

Election Day dawned with clouds that condensed into a November drizzle, increasing in intensity as the day progressed. Mr. Mortimer did not return to lunch. As dinner time approached, his wife prepared a tray and awaited the coming of the small darky who was to carry it to the poll. Her cook erupted excitedly into the dining room.

"That there Rufus, he've just come. He say, Mr. Mortimer say not to send no dinner 'tall, 'less you can send it for fifteen!"

"Fifteen!" exclaimed Anne, aghast.

The college friend, who had studied the election laws, was indignant.

"Ridiculous! Why, that many people are not allowed in the poll at one time! There should be only the judge and two clerks and two inspectors and a watcher for each party and perhaps an overseer. That doesn't make fifteen!"

"I suppose it's the alternates," explained Anne patiently. "They're hungry, too. They're supposed to be outside, of course, but they always come in if there's anything to eat." She looked ruefully at the tray. "It's lucky there's a leg of mutton for dinner, and we have three loaves of bread in the house, and pickles, and plenty of butter. We shall have to make all the meat up into sandwiches and do with canned salmon for ourselves. And I'll have to send them apples for dessert. I haven't enough of anything else."

The mutton sandwiches and apples were duly appreciated at the poll. This

small, dark, evil-smelling room, which in ordinary times was a tailor shop, was crowded with dusky figures, polite, but eager. At the sight of food, an Oriental courtesy tempered the businesslike acerbity of politics. Mr. Mortimer, weary and a bit discouraged, dispensed his hospitality with unflinching gentleness. He had challenged three undoubted repeaters and four doubtful cases, but the judge had ruled that they were all entitled to vote. Tom Carney, the division leader, had been in and out of the poll all day, keeping an admonitory eye on his henchmen.

Closing hour had come. The minority-party watcher had a right to stay and watch the count. Technically he was not supposed to aid in the counting, but counting split tickets is a complicated business for poorly educated heads, and Mr. Mortimer could be trusted. He was always asked to help.

The ballot box was opened and the unwieldy ballots laid in piles of straight or split tickets. This was not according to law, but it made the counting easier.

"One hundred and sixty-five straight Republican," announced the inspector. "Seventeen Democrat. One Prohibitionist and the rest split."

The clerks who were marking down the numbers had fine, long pencils in their hands. Now it is just possible that each may have had also a short stub concealed under the little finger. When the hand holding such a pencil stub rests carelessly upon the paper, a second mark is made. It is a device useful in counting split tickets. The clerks may have had such pencils. Mr. Mortimer would never have noticed. They were all too much absorbed to notice the sudden deluge of rain outside, when suddenly they were startled by shouts and the thud of running feet. Then came the clang of fire bells. The small darky Rufus burst in.

"Foh the land sake, judge! Yo' load



"Well, I don't know. The price of licenses ain't riz as I've heerd tell of," quoth Mrs. Blanche coyly.

o' lime what you done left backed up in the alley is caught afire!"

The judge made a leap for the door. The clerks and inspectors followed. Mr. Mortimer was left alone with the open ballot box. But Mr. Mortimer could be trusted.

The judge, by favor of the police, had parked his dump cart in a neighboring alley. The rain had slaked the lime and the wagon had burst into flames. The whole neighborhood turned out, dancing excitedly around the conflagration. The engines kept the fire from spreading, but lime and wagon were consumed. A chastened and lamenting judge returned to his duties at the poll, with the two inspectors and two clerks

at heel. Mr. Mortimer was still on guard and the ballots and lists were exactly as they had left them. So little do reformers improve their opportunities.

"But there ain't gwine to be no dispute about this yer election, anyhow," said the judge darkly, gathering up his papers. "It wouldn't look well at City Hall if we was to tell 'em how you was left alone with the ballot box! No, sir! It wouldn't look well."

A week later, at five o'clock in the afternoon of the Tuesday following Election Day, the dusky head of the judge emerged from the lower regions into Mr. Mortimer's kitchen.

"Some folks talks a lot about clean

politics," he remarked, "but give me a clean cellar! Them walls, ain't been done for two years. The parson say he can't clean up this yere division, but I done clean his cellar."

Mrs. Blanche Cooley, who had left her former position for "Mondays and Tuesdays" owing to a difference of opinion about laundry soap, was tying up the remains of two bars of that useful commodity and preparing to depart. She pointed to a brimming basket of snowy clothes with the pride of the competent.

"That there table linen," she proclaimed, "was that yellow I was fair ashamed of it. She'd had some Biddy to do it up. They don't never use enough soap, and they don't half wrench 'em. Wrench 'em in three waters, I allus says, and your clothes'll be whiter than snow."

"That so, that so," agreed the judge. "And if you'll just wait till I get myself out of my overalls, I'll do myself

the pleasure of walkin' home with you, Mrs. Cooley. In these yere hard times, about the only thing that ain't riz in price is walkin'."

"Well, I don't know. The price of licenses ain't riz as I've heerd tell of," quoth Mrs. Blanche cooly.

"That so, that so," stuttered the judge, somewhat taken aback. "And I'll not deny but I *had* something of the sort in my mind when I arranged for you to come here, Mrs. Cooley."

"Mr. Mortimer bein' a minister is right handy," observed Mrs. Blanche, still cooly.

"That so, that so. And he don't never expect no rake-off." The judge became thoughtful. "But what with losin' that load o' lime and all, I ain't feelin' so flush, even if it is just after election. No'm, I ain't feelin' so flush. But before we go, Mrs. Cooley, just give yourself the obligance to look at my cellar. It sure do take black folks to make things white!"



### "RILEY COUNTRY"

In Memory of James Whitcomb Riley

THERE'S a mellow inland district—nothing grand to meet the eye,  
With its curves of shining river, quiet town, and taper spire—  
But it all is Riley country, since a man in homely wise  
Made its every rood immortal, touched it with the sacred fire.

In each farmhouse, as you journey, where a kitchen fire burns low,  
"Orphant Annie" may be telling to a huddled childish ring  
How the "gobble-uns" judicial, sparing neither high nor low,  
Snatched the bad boy and the mocker quite away—a fearful thing!

In the crooked "Country Pathway" every thistle rocks its bee,  
Grating locusts "file the silence"—who but he would tell it so?  
And what's autumn there without him, who so loved the yellow tree  
And the frost upon the "punkin" and the fodder shocks, arow?

He could sing in stately measure, but we loved him better thus.  
Very truth was in his accents when he took that rugged tone;  
And the tears come, and we're lonely, wondering whence will come to us  
Any king for Riley Country since he left an empty throne.

JEANNIE PENDLETON HALL.

# The Girl Who Didn't Care for Women

By Margarita Spalding Gerry

Author of "As Cæsar's Wife," "The Sound of Water," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY E. C. CASWELL

Rénée Harmon was the girl—have you ever met her kind?—and the city of Washington the scene of this absorbing story of social life by a writer "who knows."

I FANCY the reason *Rénée Harmon* asked me to assist at that odd tea of hers that had such a spectacular ending was purely because my coloring happened to be a complete foil to her own. It certainly was not a sentimental attachment to a chance schoolgirl association that moved her. Any one who knew *Rénée* knew that she was entirely incapable of anything so unpractical as sentiment where the feminine was concerned. Indeed, I'm not at all sure that what passed for undue sentiment for the masculine was not, in *Rénée's* scheme of life, a sort of *ànth* form of the practical—to be *Shavian*, a "super-practicality."

"Now be sure to come, *Betty*." Her warm voice came urgently over the phone. "I'm asking you because I want you. I don't like to have a lot of girls around. Servants do a whole lot better in the dining room, and you don't have to consider their feelings——"

"Aren't you going to have any other women?" I asked, much amused. "One can't quite get along without other women, can one?"

"I seem to have got along pretty well without them," she laughed. "But—there's mother, of course, and—— Oh, yes, a cousin of ours has chosen that time to make us a visit. She's a dull and dowdy person, but I've been at her house a lot, and of course we have to be decent to her when she comes. You

know, it's at her house in *Virginia*—near *Warrenton*, you know; they have lots of money if she doesn't look it—that I met *Arthur Hatton*." Her voice took on the negligent accents with which she always spoke of this most persistent and not-to-be-offended suitor. "But do come. This is a very special occasion."

I smiled to myself as I assented and hung up. That was so like *Rénée*. Perfectly frank feminine privateer as she was, she was above certain common forms of petty snobbishness, just as she was below normal womanly scruples and delicacy. The fact that, being a government clerk, I was now a social ineligible was no deterrent to her. I doubt if it had ever entered her head. Mere social climbing was not *Rénée's* game, or only in so far as it was a means to an end. With men, who were her quarry, petty women-made social distinctions figure, as a rule, not at all. It would have been amusing, of course, for *Rénée* to have turned snobbish, since the *Harmon* household was maintained by her father's salary of chief clerk in one of the government departments. But then the average climber is much more afraid of association with a detrimental than she is of furnishing material for a merry jest.

Frankly selfish as she was and curiously unabashed in her un-Dianalike chase, *Rénée Harmon* yet had a certain

direct honesty in her methods that prevented me at least from actually disliking her. Often she really fascinated me. How could anything so lovely be expected to be governed by ordinary laws? Her beauty was a plea that never failed. So the suspicion that she wanted my presence merely to throw into relief her own dark beauty failed to outrage my sensibilities. Moreover, my curiosity was aroused by the phrase, "This is a very special occasion."

"You can never tell what *Rénée* is up to," I thought, smiling again, but this time with certain recollections of earlier stages of her progress.

I wonder whether her career would have been possible in any other city in the Union than Washington. It certainly would not have been in any other nation than ours. It happened that I had been a spectator of much of it, and the triumphant absurdity of it never failed to appeal to me.

It wasn't that *Rénée* was an adventuress—in the evil sense of the word, at least. But it would probably take a native of this country to be particularly positive in the negative; certainly no one with Latin blood could be. And perhaps nobody could quite understand her who had not known her in the long-legged, big-eyed, unkempt-haired flapper stage. The picture of her at recess time, with her bright, convincing gaze on me as she spun long romances of a fairy-tale future for herself, is still with me. Her parts in them were always of incredible brilliancy. For all the romances that the imagination of man has compassed there never was but one heroine for *Rénée*—herself.

Perhaps she was only following out the family trend in this. The *Harmons* had always, in spite of having no money and no logical reason for assuming a social position, managed to keep in the limelight. I fancy a certain instinct for cultivating newspaper people had something to do with this. And

Captain *Harmon's* Grand Army connections could always be made an asset in political circles. Then, they were an astoundingly good-looking family—tall, dark-eyed, brilliantly confident; that is, Captain *Harmon*, *Rénée*, and her brother. Mrs. *Harmon* was as a shrunken shadow cast by the three brilliant ones. My chief recollection of her is of a little woman with a nervous, questioning gaze fixed upon the auditor of a *Harmon* improvisation.

It was at my own *début* tea that I had first had an example of the methods for which *Rénée* was to become famous. She had always hung about me a good deal at school, but the frankness of her bedazzlement by the glories of my position—"right in the navy set"—was so funny in the long-legged, great-eyed child that there had been nothing offensive about it. So, on the occasion of my tea, when she had written me a note asking me if I would not ask her to come, I had sent her a card by the next mail.

It had been two years since I had seen *Rénée*, and then she had been a rangy young person in short skirts. So when a tall, extraordinarily colorful girl, with the most entrancingly curved lips I have ever seen, had appeared, very conspicuously dressed and obviously of the receiving party, I had wondered who this stranger was whom my aunt had evidently invited without my knowledge. But when the unknown had advanced confidently to meet me, with affectionate hands outstretched, I had recognized *Rénée*, who had been invited to call only and who had *taken off her hat!* The realization of her shameless little ruse to identify herself with the receiving party had made me angry for the moment—I had been young enough for that—but her effrontery was so complete as to be disarming. She had murmured:

"Mother didn't quite like my doing this for you, since I'm not to come out





She had ignored every woman she could and had coolly appropriated every desirable man who had appeared.

until next winter. But she knew how crazy I've always been about you, Betty, and I teased so hard that she gave me permission. Where do you want me to stay—here or in the tea room?"

It was a long time before the flutter that *Rénée* had made that day among the *débutantes* had died down. Until midway of the afternoon, she had ignored every woman she could and had coolly appropriated every desirable man who had appeared, breaking callously into conversations, shouldering away competitors, isolating the man of the moment from any approach, tram-

pling upon tender feminine sensibilities— Wide had been the swath of destruction that she had cut. Then, a specially attractive male having appeared, she had as coolly conducted him to a secluded nook under the stairs and had there remained with him until the receiving party broke up.

By the next season, the crash in my own affairs—my father's death and all the sad transformation scene that followed—had occurred and I was in office. But no *Washingtonian* could be ignorant of the coming *début* of Miss *Rénée* Harmon, set forth with much luxuriant verbiage.

"The Harmons' newspaper friends are real," I remember thinking.

Then stories had begun to drift to me of the financial stake the family had made to launch Rénée. They had always lived in a haphazard, delicatessen sort of way in a tiny frame house, which yet, by reason of that sixth sense of theirs for their own exploitation, was located on the fringes of what was bound to be a fashionable neighborhood. On this house Captain Harmon had put a mortgage, in order to build a brick front that should extend up another story. When the work was completed, and an ornamental grille gave an air of discriminating privacy to the side entrance, people speedily forgot the former humbleness of the domain. And only a few business men, to whose interest it was, remembered the mortgage. You couldn't help wondering at the pitiful desperation of the gamble. Was it that the family vanity made Rénée its figure-head, or was it that her own enthusiastic selfishness hypnotized them, or was it out of self-denying affection?

I hadn't gone, of course, to the début, but those who had had laughed over its shoddy pretense for weeks afterward. The few girls who had consented to serve with Rénée had been outraged clear to their little souls at the callous highwaymanship of Rénée's way. Yet, in some extraordinary manner, she had managed to be present at most things worth while that winter. Maybe it was because the entertainers had had to count upon her being a drawing card with men.

"How *does* that girl manage it?" even the clerks at my office, reading the social columns, wondered. "And in the receiving line, too!"

Then I remembered my own experience and felt that the ubiquitousness of Rénée was, to some extent at least, explained.

"After all," I thought, smiling to

myself, "there must be a good many good-natured women in Washington."

It was all the more good-natured of society because Rénée made no attempt to please women. As she said, she "didn't like to have girls around." She dispensed with even those flimsy alliances with her own sex that the least provident girl is forced into, knowing instinctively that crises will come when she will have to retreat to some soothing feminine fastness, there either to bind up her wounds or to plan new offensives. She was the only woman I have ever known who was so arrogantly confident in her own charms that she felt competent to win her fight alone.

Yet four years had gone by since that famous début, and the goal was not yet won! Stories multiplied of the shifts the family had had to make to keep Rénée before the public—how her young brother, almost a man now, had mounted the coachman's box to drive the carriage some one else had donated when a carriage had been absolutely necessary to keep up appearances. The house was thronged with men, usually with young detrimentals, although there had been episodes with fatuous elders. The diplomatic element was mainly made up of attachés of South American legations—or Orientals—those godsend to the hostess who desires to feature the pleasant word "attaché" in the list of those present; the Europeans were too canny or too fastidious, as a rule, to risk being seen where it was merely socially dinky and not brilliantly disreputable. But although her engagement had been often rumored, that brilliant alliance of which she had romanced to me with shining eyes had not yet materialized. Arthur Hatton, the one man who remained constant in his rather heavy fashion, she either did not want or was reserving as a *pis aller*. And one wondered a little uncomfortably whether

the interest on the mortgage that had built the brick front was being paid; and if it was, what was left of a chief clerk's salary to pay grocery bills!

Therefore, when *Rénée* said to me, "This is a very special occasion," I couldn't help wondering whether it was to announce a brilliant engagement. It may have been curiosity, after all, that made me ask for leave an hour earlier on the afternoon of *Rénée's* tea, so that I would have time to change my frock and get there at five.

It was not a *dansant*. *Rénée* would not permit anything that allowed feminine competitors, and she couldn't very well have danced with all the men all the time; somewhere there would be an opening for a wicked little *débutante*, avid for her rightful share of attention, to run off with the partner *Rénée* particularly fancied. So, while she consistently privateered at others' dances, she was not going to waste money—or further imperil credit—in giving other girls a chance to privateer at hers.

No, musical afternoons were her specialty. She had a really beautiful voice—a warm, impassioned, amorous voice that was calculated to move anything masculine. When she sang, her brilliant eyes became wistful abodes of softness, her lovely mouth took on dreaming curves, and the tender cleft in her chin was a man trap.

*Rénée* had evidently just finished a song when I arrived at the brick front. She stood by the piano, still retaining the pose of the song, smiling starily up at the man who was bending over her. He was tall, suave, dark-skinned, no longer young, but carrying with the really exquisite finish of his appearance an impression of authority. There was a caressing sort of dominance in his manner.

The small room was uncomfortably full. As was to be expected, there were more men than you would often see in the afternoon, most of them foreign

in appearance. The dark skin and carefully waxed mustache that marked the man who stood by *Rénée's* side were repeated everywhere. But there were women, too—more women than rumor would have led you to expect to see at *Rénée's*, for she was generally let severely alone by matrons and conspired against by buds. Some of the women could easily be identified as new people who were obliged to be catholic in their tastes, since they could not afford, as yet, to discriminate. But there was actually one reluctant-looking cabinet lady just entering with me, with a general air of asking herself what she was doing in that boat.

I looked around the hot, crowded little room. It happened that I had never been in the transformed brick front before. Although the afternoon of which I speak was a year or so back, it was yet after the cozy-corner frenzy in interior decoration of which one occasionally hears echoes in remote places. Not even the most enterprising *débutante* of the day lured the casual young man to a divan heaped with plump cushions and backed by an era-defying combination of Oriental draperies and North American Indian trophies.

But all that was useful in the past *Rénée* appropriated for her own sovereign use. Therefore, one could hardly move around the tiny drawing-room for the heaped, luxurious divan that blocked up the right of way, its pendant barbaric lamp arranged to throw a becoming glow over *Rénée's* face. For the rest, the room was tawdry in its attempt at color. And my uncomfortably-keen eyes detected an actual spider web spun from the dusty hanging lantern to the crowded wall.

*Rénée* was completely absorbed in her flushed, low-toned *tête-à-tête* with the courtly gentleman, who still lingered, turning music over with the gentle touch of the real music lover. She looked up long enough to nod me an

abstracted greeting and to signify, by a bit of negligent dumb show, that the sphere of my operations was to promote the progress of guests from the drawing-room into the tea room—a gentler form of “bouncer,” as it were.

The gentleman, whether because he understood that *Rénée* had made the introduction that courtesy would have prompted in an American drawing-room, or because courtesy was too instinctive with him to be thwarted, made me a deferential inclination. I had again the fleeting impression that this was a personage, older than one would have at first thought from his unlined face, but with something in the very indulgence of his salute that suggested the unflattering simplicity of the Oriental's view as to the sole function of women. Yet his features were too mobile, his desire to please “the ladies” too sincere, for an Oriental's.

As I turned away, I had a passing moment of wonder, like the cabinet lady, as to why I was there. Why should I help a shallow, selfish girl, who had no claim on me at all, in her effort to get where she didn't belong? Then the fun of the thing got hold of me, and curiosity to see the little farce through.

But when I got into the tea room and saw the piteously anxious face of Mrs. Harmon, aged ten years since I had seen her last, I doubted whether it was a farce that we were witnessing, after all. I knew perfectly well that I should have to stay and help her out.

I assure you “assisting” at this tea of *Rénée*'s was no sinecure. As far as everything but display went, we were, not assistants, but the whole thing. Mrs. Harmon poured into my ears a recital of a chapter of accidents that would have been laughable if she herself had not been so pathetic. To begin with, they had evidently gone into the thing with painful economy, trusting to the brilliancy of *Rénée* to ob-

scure defects and with a gambler's confidence that they would somehow “muddle through.” They had planned to have the indispensable near-English door man, one man in the dining room, and the maid of all work to wash dishes and serve in the kitchen.

“*Rénée* was just as good as she could be about trying to help with the sandwiches, only of course she doesn't know much about such things, poor child, and we sent her off to lie down. And we would have got along beautifully, Mrs. Wakefield and I, if it hadn't been for the despicable conduct of that girl!” wailed Mrs. Harmon, “that girl” being the maid, who had, not unnaturally, gone on strike and slammed the back door just at the moment when guests were beginning to arrive at the front.

“And of course the dining-room man can't be asked to do a thing in the kitchen, and *Rénée* *wouldn't* ask enough girls to assist, or Mrs. Wakefield or I could slip out there— Oh, dear!”

She really did wring her hands as I have never seen any one do it off the stage. So of course I had to stay and help out all I could after that.

Mrs. Wakefield was the little woman presiding over the samovar—of course *Rénée* would have everything, even her tea service, as exotic looking and brassy as she could—and I inferred her to be the superfluous cousin of whom *Rénée* had spoken; for the magnificent being haughtily administering ices at the other end could be no other than the Real Thing decoyed into a sortie out of her sphere and realizing it. It further complicated matters that all domestic difficulties must be kept from the Real Thing.

The cousin, if she *was* far from up to date in appearance, was a level-headed and efficient person, capable of seeing to all around her and behind her and at the same time pouring tea with

dainty exactitude. Her hands were notably beautiful. And she seemed to be as wrong-headedly devoted to the cause of Rénée as were Mrs. Harmon and I. When a shortage of clean china made it necessary that something drastic should be done and that I—since Mrs. Wakefield manifestly could not leave her place—was the one to do it, for one moment I felt strongly inclined to desert and leave these impossible Harmon's on their scuttling ship. I was pretty thoroughly exasperated with Rénée and not averse to seeing that amazingly complete piece of egotism discomfited. But an exchange of glances with the little matron pouring tea changed all that. Her quiet confidence that I would do all I could to save the situation was impelling.

"Here is Rénée's one chance," it seemed to say. "These poor, foolish people have made their last stake. If they don't win it, the rising tide of bills and mortgages will swamp them. What difference does it make if that crude young selfishness wouldn't raise a hand to help one of us? It's the bond between all women that impels us. It's woman for woman against the world."

Absurd to feel all this germinate just from the direct glance of a dowdy little woman, especially when all that the covenant of women seemed to demand at the moment was to find some way of sliding a trayful of soiled dishes out into the kitchen without being discov-

ered by the Real Thing. Perhaps it was because the echo of Rénée's "This is a very special occasion" was in my ears that I had an odd feeling that something pended of more moment than the success of an unimportant little tea.

As for the task demanded—that wasn't so light a matter. The Harmon's' kitchen! Its unpleasant squalor



She stood by the piano, smiling starily up at the man who was bending over her.

and frownsiness brought up a sudden recollection of the sweet-smelling, orderly, sunny spot my mother's delicate insistence with the maids had always won for us. But I managed somehow, and got the china back into the tea room and onto the table without any one but Mrs. Wakefield observing me.

It was from the Real Thing that I had my first bit of enlightenment as to "the special occasion." When she heard my name, she remembered my

father and dropped into the assumption, inevitable to her kind, that if she hadn't seen me for some years it was because I had been traveling.

"Only good feature of this horrible war is that it brings people together here again," she commented, and there wasn't any time, or any particular reason, for undeceiving her. For she added, evidently with some feeling of injury and with entire irrelevance, "My husband's been wanting Foreign Relations for a long time, and I suppose he's glad he drew it, but if it's going to make this sort of thing necessary, I'll feel like going to Palm Beach a month earlier."

I suppose I looked blank, for she quite graciously took the trouble to explain.

"My husband thought I'd better come. Why, they say Guirola's serious—though I don't see how he gets over the girl's family; they're proud as any old Spanish *hidalgo* ever was, those South American nabobs. I suppose he hasn't been here long enough to know what frightfully bad form the girl is. But my husband made me accept just on the chance that he might be serious. All this Pan-American business is making it necessary to be so polite to those people. We never used to have to be. You don't know when you're talking to the very man who can tie up commercial plans or prevent the defense league from coming to anything. And Guirola must be somebody important or they wouldn't have given him a legation—being a bachelor, you know—or maybe he's a widower."

That explained it all—what *Rénée* had said and my feeling that something was going to happen. That dark, elegant-looking man was *Señor Guirola*, the new minister from X—

"He certainly looks very devoted," I said.

"Mawkish—sickening!" The imposing dame was prudently distributing

her minute spoonfuls of *frappé* in the glasses while a lull in incoming guests gave her leisure. "It would be much more suitable for her to marry that young Hatton. He's rich enough and he's her own age. What ramshackle people they are! You'd think *Guirola* would see. But then any middle-aged man can be made to believe anything if a handsome girl flatters him a little. And he must be serious or he wouldn't hang around her that way. It isn't Latin to show any decent girl attentions unless one intends to marry her."

A sudden invasion of guests tea-ward put an end to the conversation. I had to make several more dives into that kitchen and out again into the atmosphere of furs and laces and perfumed face powder. It was an amusing transition.

I was rather surprised at the number of really good people that appeared and at the fair proportion of women. And everywhere I perceived that the rumor of her being about to make this surprisingly good match had created an admiration, almost a respect, for *Rénée* that I had never observed before. Women who had hitherto been inclined to visit upon *Rénée* the consequences of her aspiring poverty, her unfairly won prominence, her quite outrageous popularity with men, and—above all—her outspoken indifference to women, were hastening to fall into line before her at the crack of the only whip they recognized. So I began to understand that the feeling I had had that this was *Rénée's* chance, the *Harmon* big stake, had really been a bit of intuition.

And yet, just once, I wondered whether this was the dream that *Rénée* herself really most wanted to have come true, or whether I had been right in fancying that her negligent mention of him hid something more than mere liking for *Arthur Hatton*.

"I wonder if she knows how to be careful enough," the Real Thing said



to me in an aside. "You can't turn all the ideas a man's been brought up with entirely topsy-turvy. And of course all this display of a spoiled American girl is just exactly opposite to the convention of a country where no man ever dreams of considering the chance of being alone with an attractive woman as anything but an opportunity for taking liberties. I still don't quite understand how any one with his prejudices can swallow—— But there! The girl has just swept him off his feet, I suppose. She's quite capable of doing it."

The crowd was at its height a little before six. I decided that my intrepid little coworker in the tea room—with whom I had hardly exchanged five words that were not about tea or ices, but for whom I had a feeling of real comradeship—could get along without me for the remaining minutes, and made my way toward Rénée so to inform her. She and Señor Guirola stood side by side, so like a bride and groom receiving congratulations that no one could have escaped the thought.

And certainly no bridegroom could have expressed a madder devotion. The tide of his emotion had risen since I had had my first glimpse of him. It was as if he himself were almost surprised at it. His dark eyes burned on her; with all his courtesy it was plain that he was impatient of the necessary interruptions. And his impatience seemed to let loose a sort of underlying contempt for the whole gathering. He clutched nervously the sheet of music that he had rolled up in his hand. The words of the Real Thing came to my mind. It was indeed as if he were swept away. I caught his aside to Rénée:

"And to-morrow—you permit that I see you to-morrow? It is never that you have granted me that gift of seeing you—alone."

"I suspect that is because you've

never asked me. With pleasure, señor." The girl smiled up at him.

I doubt if any woman has ever been more beautiful than Rénée was at that moment, not even Helen of Troy. Triumph, joy, color, radiance—and her triumph brought out not the hard, forbidding quality that one often sees, but a most lovely softness. And in answer to the suppressed significance that even I could catch in the man's tone, there was only a carefree thoughtlessness. Guirola looked aside at her in something like uncertainty and disquiet.

The sound of a smothered altercation in the hall broke into this moment. My nervous sense of responsibility had made me fearful, and I slipped out to see what was the matter.

"*Don Ramón—Señor Ministro—il faut que je parle con el Señor Ministro!*" an agitated youth was postulating in a mixture of French and Spanish with the near-Englishman at the door.

Biggs was looking down at him with the expression of exasperated superiority with which his kind invariably regard the benighted speaker of a language they do not understand. When the youngster saw me, hope seemed again to come to him and he bombarded me. For a moment I was as dense as Biggs, but eventually I caught "señor," and the familiar yellow envelope helped to convey to my dull brain the idea that "Don Ramón" was Señor Guirola and that this was a messenger, probably a secretary, from the legation.

"You wish to see Minister Guirola?" I asked him in French.

Miraculously he seemed to understand my effort.

"*Si, si, señorita!*" He nodded eagerly. "*El Señor Ministro——*"

Then he was off again so fast I couldn't follow him. An English word or so that I recognized—wreckage in the torrent—only made it more confus-



Miraculously he seemed to understand my effort. "*Si, si, senorita!*" He nodded eagerly.  
 "*El Señor Ministro—*"

ing. I caught "*señora*" several times, accompanied by violent brandishings of the telegram.

My wits must have been asleep. It is incredible that this conveyed no more to my mind than that the little South American had a telegram for his chief in which some woman was concerned. But a curious dame standing near me was quicker.

"You have a message for the minister," she enunciated slowly and commandingly, emphasizing each word crisply as one does when one teaches a

child. There was a glow of pleasant excitement in her eyes.

"*Si, si, senora!*" He nodded enthusiastically. Then, evidently seized with that desire to practice his late lessons in a foreign language to which the best of us is subject, he added, "*Eet ees fr-r-om la Señora Doña Maria—*"

Several ladies within earshot started excitedly. Still dense, I was confusedly thinking, "'*Señora*'—why, that's their equivalent for 'Mrs.'

Then an evil sort of avidness in the

women's faces was a danger signal. All at once, I knew that I ought to get that man away from them before he had leaked any further information. But my alertness had come too late. The women had him.

"Señora Guirola?" questioned the one who had first spoken, fairly quivering in her excitement. "A telegram from her to the minister?" She paused long enough to gather eyes to her with her significant emphasis. "Señora Guirola is coming, then, to Washington?"

"Oh, fool!" I was saying to myself. "Why didn't I get him away sooner? But still it may be some other feminine relative. It can't be—how can it be?—that! It's impossible that any one could have been so deceived!"

The charm of an impromptu English exercise, together with the woman's really clever air of being familiar with the whole situation, was too much for the none-too-great astuteness of the embryo diplomat. He was evidently a simple, rather unintelligent boy, a son of some wealthy family, probably, being licked into shape—and not very far advanced in the process.

"Yes, madame," he beamed. "She weel come when the mineester—*el Señor Ministro*—have arrange for *la casa*—the house. Eet is of thees she ees telegraph. The legation we have engage ees too leetla—oh, by much eet ees too leetla!"

By this time the alarm had spread through all the little room. The last to be reached were the two by the piano. But, in the end, the Señor Guirola was startled and raised his head. He made a step toward the little dark youth, who was smiling affably in the midst of the group of bridling women, but he was too late to ward off the blow.

"You mean"—the woman's voice was really loud, I suppose; it seemed to me to ring like a trumpet—"you mean—the wife of Señor Guirola—is coming?"

She was trembling with a sort of exultant excitement—a far from lovely sight, an elderly social harpy on the scent of scandal.

"*Si, si, señora,*" he babbled. "But eet have delay her that there ees no house enough beeg that we have found for all the leetla *ninos* and their *criadas*—their ser-vants, no? Oh, it must be *una casa grande*—a mos' beeg house to hold all the family of the Guirola, even when the papa and the mamma of Don Ramón, and his brothers that are not married, and his sister that her husband has lost, are not with him. So *la señora* say——"

"Magnato!" came the minister's peremptory voice like a whiplash.

The blackness that he could detect on the minister's face warned the boy that something in the situation was not pleasing. He presented the telegram hastily to his superior, made him a ceremonial salutation, and bowed himself out, leaving a room aghast and quivering.

I despair of being able to give the least conception of what that tragic moment held. It was as when a motion picture suddenly comes to a stop and the scene is held in suspense, motionless, but quivering. There in the hot brilliancy stood the two trapped, frozen figures—man and woman. Around them was a ring of men, some with chivalrous distress on their faces, some with a lurking unmanly relish, but all embarrassed and sheepish—and all powerless. For in an outer ring, all about them, were the women. To my hectic excitement, it seemed like a vast sea of women. And they were all unfriendly. Almost without exception, they held a score against *Rénée*. Here was a mother with the slighting of an unattractive daughter to avenge, there an elderly woman sore with the memory of brilliant indifference where youth should have shown deference or a girl who had once helplessly watched

the beauty carry off the man whose presence had meant fulfillment. A woman was on trial before a folk court of woman enemies, eager for her downfall. It was a packed jury and not one, but many, biased judges.

The picture holds in its heart the Latin's dark face, shocked into fierceness. Something of the sickness of a man wrenched from a dream of pleasure was in it. But there was a distress in it, too, that was not merely of self. Unless I dreamed it all, his eyes were fastened on Rénée's face with a startled wonder, a dawning comprehension—and an almost tender regret.

And who could have looked at her without a passionate, heartbreaking sympathy? For the frozen mask was dropping from her face. She was perfectly helpless before them all. Her eyes—never more beautiful—looked with startled unbelief straight into the bitter failure that life had offered her. What if, in her fervid childish desire to grasp all of life's good—all in one triumphant moment—she had brushed ruthlessly past others? She had come singing by an enchanted way, and now she stared aghast at ruin. For the simple fact was enough to damn her socially—the girl who had aspired to greatness had been publicly humiliated by a scene that only the grotesqueness of farce comedy could equal. She had failed where she had dared to aspire over other women. She had been made ridiculous, fooled by a married man whose progeny needed a hotel to house them; and the social world never forgets absurdity, although it may pass over moral lapses. But surely neither Guírola nor any other man, however molded by a foreign code, could fail to see, in the piteous discomfiture of her face, the utter innocence in Rénée's dream of high alliance. And are there any men so base as not to feel a pang at having bruised the rainbow wings of a child's dream?

Rénée raised her head. Across the futile, foolish men who surrounded her, she sent a glance that was all one piteous appeal to the women gathered there. Her glance found me—rested—pleaded. I roused myself and tried to think of action.

But I was not needed. A voice came out of the crowd somewhere, and instantly the picture was dissolved, even as Rénée's dream had been, and it was real life once more. The voice was that of Mrs. Wakefield, the matronly little cousin, and she was in the thick of it all, quite casually standing by Rénée and Señor Guírola. When she had heard that inaudible cry and reached the spot, I don't know. But her quiet, matter-of-fact voice gave us the impression that all was as it should be, and that there had been no pause.

"Wouldn't the Spindler house do, Señor Guírola? I noticed as I came past that all the agents in town seem to have their signs up there. And I remember that when the Frobishams had it, I thought it was a regular hotel for accommodations. Is the señora a good sailor? I think you said the señora was a good sailor, didn't you, Rénée? It's trying on these coast trips at this season, but I remember Rénée said that Doña Maria and she were the only women that didn't miss a meal coming up from Panama. Or was it your music that was the bond between you, Rénée? Anyway, we are all the gainers because she asked the minister to look you up.

"But I'm afraid the child won't be here to welcome her, señor, for I'm taking Rénée down into the country with me to-morrow. And I can't let her off because I just don't dare to face Arthur Hatton without her. You know it's at my house they met, and he's always been *my* candidate, and I'm naturally a little bit vain—since he's the one. Now, Rénée, you needn't frown at me like that! What if it isn't an-

nounced yet? I can't for the life of me see what difference a month or so makes. But—oh, dear—I didn't intend to have every one hear me—I didn't notice—”

Making inarticulate murmurs expressive of the embarrassment of a simple domestic woman at perceiving that she is the center of a large and interested circle, the dowdy cousin subsided bashfully. And I—with open mouth, I'm afraid—stared at the wonderful fabricator of those brilliant and heavenly and most useful lies with sentiments of reverential admiration that I have accorded very few literally truthful persons. And was it admiration for that masterly efficiency that had saved a disastrous situation, or was it something very like love for the snubbed and ignored little thoroughbred who had *cared* enough to do it?

I had one dissolving view of the minister's face. His eyes were still on *Rénée*, and something in the rush of color back to her face—and there was in truth something touching in it as of a child who had raised her head from a passion of despair over a broken toy at the first whisper that, after all, it was not so broken but that it could be mended—banished the question from his eyes and the sullenness of baffled desire and left only a regret that was entirely noble. Whatever his humiliating misunderstanding had been of *Rénée* and her place in the alien social system, he seconded instantly and most generously the little cousin's effort to repair it. Bowing over *Rénée's* hand

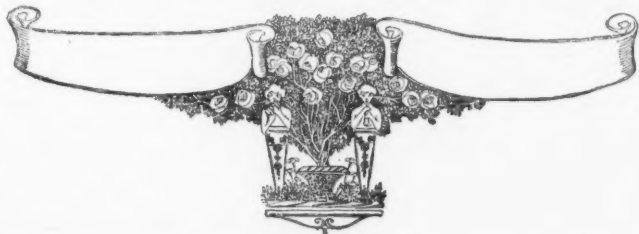
with a delightful mixture of fatherly benediction with the obeisance that men of all ages must make before imperial beauty, he improvised melodiously:

“I must, then, answer the *Señora Guirola's* letter in a disappointing negative! It was but in my letter of yesterday that she begged that her young friend might be at the station to meet her on her arrival in a strange city. But when I tell her the cause—oh, it is she that will forgive! For the hearts of all you women are of a softness when it is of happy love one hears.”

Over the head of *Rénée*, the minister's eyes sought those of the cousin. And that glance was exchanged by which one master artist salutes another.

In the narrow little hall, I came upon Mrs. Harmon. In the relaxation of the strain, she had crumpled up in a chair that stood there. Her eyes were on the silver plate on which the hall man had just received the postman's contribution. On top was the unmistakable envelope of a bank notice. But with *Rénée*, a vision of radiant loveliness, receiving, with soft and charming confusion, the congratulations of her eager women friends—the Real Thing among them—on her engagement to Arthur Hatton, the young Virginia capitalist, the mother's face all at once broadened into a smile. The serpent's fangs were drawn!

And I wondered whether, after all, *Rénée* had not got what, in her heart of hearts, she really wanted.



# The Tyranny of Clothes

A Tea-Table Discussion

By Hildegarde Lavender

Author of "Leaks," "Out in It," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY LAURA E. FOSTER

THE doctor had been absent from the tea-table group for several months. The unexpected opportunity to go to Serbia in a professional capacity had, of course, been far too splendid to resist, and she had gone. Then she had come back to a hot summer in the city. And the total result, as far as the doctor's health was concerned, was indicated by the fact that she was banished to an open-air life in a Rocky Mountain camp for a month or two.

It was from this, the latest of her journeyings, that she descended upon the coterie of friends one winter afternoon as twilight was closing in toward lamplight. At the door of the drawing-room, she paused in some amazement and confusion. Could she have come to the wrong house? No, there they all were—grandmother, hostess, bride, débutante, Madame Cræsus, and the rest. But what, *what*, were they doing?

They were seated—the coterie, and a half score more of ladies not so intimately attached to one another—on small chairs placed around the walls of the room. In the long, cleared space in the center a very good-looking young woman—the doctor afterward recognized her as Madame Cræsus' niece—paraded with an undulating grace; her eyes were bright and mirthful, and the color on her cheeks was high. She wore a remarkable confection which the doctor hastily diagnosed as a bolster slip of cloth of gold with long,

wide towellike pieces of violet chiffon flowing away from the shoulders, both back and front. And at the head of the room sat an unknown figure, from whose lips purred a stream of apparently authoritative sartorial talk.

The doctor hesitated, but the hostess, catching a glimpse of her, halted the solemn proceedings and dashed to the door to greet and gather in the returned wanderer. The lady at the head of the room, whom the doctor now observed to be robed in a fashion not entirely dissimilar to that of the amateur model, frowned, and waited with a critical air of patience until greetings were over. Then she resumed her discourse, and the doctor, sitting to one side, learned that her friends were considering the subject of dress reform.

From the speaker she gathered that a great many other women were also seriously considering it. "Free women" the lecturer called them; women who refused to submit any longer to the triple despotism of dress—the discomfort or unhealthfulness of it, the expense of it, and the hideousness of it. The doctor's somewhat severe features brightened as she listened; it was evident that a responsive chord had been touched in her heart. But when she discovered that the lecturer's weapon for ending the rule of the despot was the arrangement of cloth of gold and hand-painted chiffon in which Mademoiselle Cræsus paraded gracefully and charmingly before them, the look of hope faded from her features.



"Of course she looks lovely in it," she whispered to her next neighbor. "She looks lovely in everything—a gingham pinafore, a shirt waist and stock, a bathing suit—anything! But imagine the rest of us in that—What does she call it, the designer? A costume? An arrangement? A dress?"

"S-sh!" whispered the rapt neighbor.

"One thing," declared the inventor of the dress system which was being shown, as the young vision of a toilet displayer retired to don a tea gown of ivory-white crêpe de Chine and lemon-colored georgette, with touches of orange velvet—a superb triumph of the colorist's art—

"one thing my system absolutely refuses to recognize, and that is the shirt waist and skirt. It does not exist. It is too hideous, too awful! That lovely line from shoulder to hip is always unbroken in all my models."

At that the doctor snorted audibly. Furthermore, she looked about her at the said lovely line as it was exemplified in the persons of the twenty attentive listeners. Those who heard the familiar sound of pugnacious disagreement from the doctor realized that as soon as the originator of the dress system that refused to recognize the existence of the blouse and skirt had departed, there would be pungent comment.

They were not mistaken. When the beautiful fabrics had been laid reverently in their boxes, and their owner and designer had seen them borne before her to the waiting taxicab—the bearer having the appearance of assisting in some holy rite before the high altar; when the less familiar figures had withdrawn from the house, purling thanks to the hostess for the wonderful opportunity she had afforded them; and when the intimates had fallen upon the doctor, and had appraised her looks and felt of her biceps and rejoiced in her restoration to health—then the company asked her what she thought of artistic dress reform.



A very good-looking young woman paraded with an undulating grace.

"Was that it?" asked the doctor scornfully.

They told her that what she had seen was a reformed system of dressing for women, the keynote of which was to be beauty.

"Beauty!" snorted the doctor. "The things were lovely enough, I grant you. But will you kindly tell me how the head stenographer in a Wall Street office would look trailing those unfitted yards of five-dollar-a-yard fabric into her place of business every day? How would Rosie Kirolsky, feather maker, look, wearing a cheesecloth reproduction of the crêpe-and-chiffon affair? How would——"

"The trouble with you, dear doctor," said Madame Crœsus, in a slightly injured voice, "is that you always insist upon looking at everything from the angle of the working classes." One could easily infer that Madame Crœsus, with a hopeful disregard of her natural limitations, was contemplating a cloth-of-gold-and-flame-colored-velvet effect in evening clothes. "But must we always look at dress from the angle of the Rosie Kirolskys?"

"Of course we must," returned the doctor briskly. It was apparent that she had come home thirsting for argument, a giant refreshed. "Of course. Because, whether we wish it or not, Rosie Kirolsky is going to dress like Viola Crœsus, here, even though Viola uses materials more sumptuous than those of the Queen of Sheba on a visit to Solomon, and has them put together by an artist, while Rosie buys her goods in the half-price basement and cobbles them together with her own fingers at night. I'm half inclined to think that the first and last angle from which we ought to look at dress is the effect upon the Rosie Kirolskys. It's on account of them, primarily, that I believe in dress reform. There are hundreds of thousands of them, and there are only hundreds of the pretty Violas;

and what happens to the Rosies' health and comfort and money and leisure is infinitely more important to the world than what happens to the health and comfort and money and leisure of the Violas. But, after all, it matters to all of us."

"Thanks so much," murmured the débutante. "I'm always so grateful when the doctor admits that there is any sense in which a poor worm like me counts in the world, or in which anything that befalls me is of the slightest importance."

"It's a coincidence," the doctor went on, ignoring her young friend's impertinence, "but the last thing of which I thought when I left Colorado was dress reform, and here it is the first thing that greets me upon my return. There really is something in what that serious dame, the dress designer, said about it's being in the air."

"Were the women out there thinking about it, too?" asked the grandmother.

"I don't know how much they were thinking about it. They were practicing it on the ranch. Just imagine! For two months I had the use of my legs! I wore modified breeches and leather puttees when I was out riding or tramping; and though I sometimes remembered to put on a short skirt over them when I came in, I didn't always. And I had the freedom of my throat, in a flannel blouse with a turned-down collar. And the freedom of my chest and abdomen, with nothing more restraining in the corset line than the elastic athletic girdle.

"I assure you that I could have wept when I folded that outfit away and realized that I was returning to be again a slave under the universal feminine bondage—the bondage of dress. I almost told myself that I would give up all my hopes of the ballot, all my claims to political freedom, just to be rescued from the tyranny of clothes.

"I see the bride looking at me dis-

sentingly. She is commenting in her little blond head on the fact that I have never seemed to her to be a slave to clothes, even as things are. Well, I'm not so abject a slave as most women, I admit—I admit it with pride. But we are all slaves. We give up too much time, too much money, too much energy, too much brain tissue, to the mere problem of keeping decently covered. And what is the result of it all?"

"At least," said the bride, "we dress more beautifully than men. Their clothes—their uniform, for that is what it is—is hideous! From the black cylinders that inclose their legs to the brown derbies that imprint red marks on their foreheads, their clothes are awful!"

"And do you think, really and truly, that women's are a bit less ugly, a bit less ludicrous?" demanded the doctor warmly. "You can't be in earnest! We don't need even to discuss the health-and-convenience aspect of the case; but take beauty! Last spring I rode up and down Fifth Avenue on top of the bus and gave real study to the aspect of the people in the street; it was after this interest in dress seized on me. And I pledge you my serious word that there is not a bit more art, not a bit more grace, in women's clothes than in men's, and that there is very little more individuality! I have heard women plume themselves on the fact—the assumption, rather—that feminine dress was an individual matter while masculine was a cut-and-dried class affair in which the individual taste and fancy had no play. If you women would take that one street—the show street for clothes of the whole United States, I suppose it is—and would be honest with yourselves about what you see there, that bubble of individual taste would be forever exploded for you!"

"Why, doctor!" exclaimed the scandalized hostess, one of whose dearest beliefs was thus rudely challenged.

"It's the truth. There's no more difference between the cut of the debutante's winter suit and the bride's than there is between the grandmother's and the hostess'. And that is none at all. There may be some slight variation in color or in trimming; but the essential garment shows no greater individual variation than is shown in the suits of two men.

"And last spring, when I made my study, the women's dresses, instead of being as easy to order as the salad for dinner, had taken hours and hours of thought, more hours of fitting, hours of changing. It's all too silly!"

"Out of a hundred pairs of women's boots or shoes, eighty-five were made on one pattern—a pattern designed to induce permanent pedal trouble in any one using it; eighty-five were made up in fawn or champagne or white or gray kid; eighty-five were conspicuous without being attractive, expensive without being valuable. Out of every hundred hats, eighty-five were black sailor shapes, wide-brimmed, varying a negligible amount in lining or in edging, in bows or flowers or feathers, but essentially all of a piece.

"There was just as great variety in men's hats and suits. Eighty-five men out of a hundred every day that week were wearing gray suits and white sailor hats with a black band. Their total effect along the pavements was no more monotonous than that of the women. And for every hour they had spent at their tailors', women had spent five. And all the blessed hours that women had put in in the consideration of what they were going to wear and how much they were going to pay for it and how it was going to look—for every one of those wasted hours of women, the men had gotten actual value out of their time! They had played golf or preached preparedness and pacifism, or they had built houses or edited papers or sold bonds or beans."



"The trouble with you, dear doctor," said Madame Crœsus, in a slightly injured voice, "is that you always insist upon looking at everything from the angle of the working classes."

"Oh, come, now, doctor!" said the grandmother persuasively. "Come, now! You must admit that women show a trifle more of individuality than men——"

"I deny it absolutely," said the doctor firmly. "Women think they show individuality in dress when they decide to have green chiffon instead of mauve crêpe. But the fact that there is green chiffon and mauve crêpe this year is due to the purely commercial gentlemen who control the dress trade. 'It is to be a lilac year,' one reads, and wandering among the shops, one finds

that it, indeed, is a lilac year, and that it is next door to impossible to get one's old stand-by, turquoise blue. The choice of fabrics and of colors is controlled almost, if not quite, as absolutely as those of styles by the gentlemen who arrange dress as a matter of trade. Women have nothing to do with it.

"Three years ago, we would all have been caught dead rather than in a pleated skirt or a skirt with an overtunic or a skirt that measured more than two yards around the bottom. Now we would be caught dead sooner than appear in a skirt that is not pleated or overdaped or that is not at least four yards around the bottom. Individual choice? The expression of fancy? A chance for the unit to separate

herself from the mass? Nonsense! Stuff and nonsense!

"There aren't more than three or four styles, at the most, that appear and survive in a year; and they appear, not at the behest of the women who are going to wear them, but at that of the men who are going to sell them—the men who have said among themselves: 'The one thing necessary is that women shouldn't be able to appear this season in the clothes we made them wear last season. It would ruin our business.' And so they get to work and they design something that will prac-

tically render useless last season's wardrobe, and they advertise it on the figures of noted Parisian persons of the light world, and in trade journals and through the jobbers. And—presto!—we all hurry out and buy what they have decreed, after having gone through an immense amount of pretense of individuality. And there you are!"

She paused for breath.

"Mind you," she hurried on, forestalling interruption, "I am not opposed to uniformity in women's dress. On the contrary, I believe in it. All that I am so violently opposed to is the pretense of individuality, with all its time-wasting, money-wasting rites. If we achieved the beautiful results of a true individuality, it would be different, but we don't. As for looking better than men, we don't! And it isn't necessary that we should. Some women, of course, are easier to look at than some men, but the converse is equally true. And certainly, when you find an ugly woman, you haven't helped her in the least by accentuating her points of unlikeness to some average model of her sex!

"No, I believe in uniformity, but I believe in a real uniformity, such as men have achieved. I don't insist upon the bifurcation of the female skirt, though my experience on the ranch makes me incline to that, but I do insist—or rather beg and entreat—that we standardize our dress. I think the time will come—and I want it in my own day—when women will be as ashamed to admit to spending half their time in shops and milliners' and dress-makers' as they would be now to confess to spending that amount of time at the dentists', the chiropodists' and the aurists'.

"It is just as much a mark of a futile, childish brain to meet every social situation with a Flora MacFlimsy cry of 'nothing to wear' as it would be

to meet every threat of an unexpected guest with a wail that there was no soup, no potatoes, and, oh, dear, what could be done about dessert? But there are women, advanced enough to blush at the thought of sending around six or seven times a day to the grocer's and the butcher's, who, nevertheless, don't think it equally reprehensible to be always going somewhere for a fitting!

"Now, as I have said, we have no true individuality in dress, we women, no true freedom of choice. We are the creatures of the fabric manufacturers and the costume designers. Our clothes are not made for us, whether we are rich or poor, whether we patronize the most expensive tailors or the cheapest ready-to-wear departments of the department stores; they are made to sell goods. So why not accept the situation as it is? Why not give up the vain pretext of individualism, give up going through with the motions of freedom, taste, and all the rest of it, and frankly adopt a uniform? It need not be like men's, and it may show as much individuality as theirs shows. But let us refuse to change it at the blowing of the Paris trade whistle; let us refuse to discard our wardrobes before they grow shabby.

"We do dress in a uniform, without achieving a single advantage of uniformity. Let us insist upon the advantages; that is all! Let us keep one style for each part of life—such and such a garment for informal wear at home, such and such for the street, such and such for dress, and such and such for sports. We'll replace them as they wear out—and not before! And the Rosie Kirolskys, who strain and pinch on necessities to follow the will-of-the-wisp of fashions, will enjoy a period of rest and peace and may even start a life-insurance fund!"

She drank deep of tea, while her friends looked at her with tolerant

smiles; she had just come back to them and she might be as queer as she pleased! Then they took new stock of one another's clothes.

"You've gone to a new man, haven't you?" said the bride to the débutante. "He certainly makes a good coat."

"Yes," agreed the débutante, and the

doctor, putting down her cup, looked with interest at the coat and, sighing, said:

"What's his address? I——"

Then she had the grace to blush as the others laughed light-heartedly. For the tyranny of clothes cannot be overcome in one merely verbal rebellion.



### A SQUIRREL IN THE PARK

THROUGH the mazes green and bright

Flits a little furry sprite,  
When a loud and blaring cry  
Checks him for a moment—shy,  
Half resentful—till his ear  
Knows the monster drawing near;  
Then he romps again, in scorn  
Of that rude, intrusive horn.

In the very nick of time  
He has friendly oaks to climb,  
Whence his bright and bulging eye  
Ogles that which thunders by;  
Or he bounds with lovely leaps  
To the mimic forest's deeps,  
Sketching, in his frolic fine,  
Quaint old Hogarth's beauty line.

Well done, little forester,  
Jacketed in smoky fur!  
You, whose fathers, on a day,  
Heard old Pan's wild music play,  
Scarcely dread the angry peals  
Of a modern god on wheels;  
Coolly see against the skies  
Many-windowed walls arise.

Yet so exquisite your grace,  
All so foreign to the place,  
We could dream, against our will,  
Ariel haunts our treetops still.

RHEEM DOUGLAS.



# Love and a Maid

By Marianne Gauss

Author of "Pete the Weak," "The Glory Moth," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY CLARENCE ROWE

Some of his friends did not like his marriage, and protested that he might have had any one, had he but realized. But how could they understand?

THAT a housemaid should become the wife of one of the very great men of her native city, and be honored and beloved by him always, is a kind of American fairy tale that may at any time come true. It happened to Eloise.

At the time she worked for the Dorrs, she was very young, and very ornamental in the dining room, like a damask cloth, an embroidered centerpiece, or a flower in a porcelain vase.

Shortly before the luncheon hour one day, she tucked up her dark hair with a pink comb and put on the plain white shirt-waist suit prescribed by her mistress. While making salad in the warm dish pantry, she kept her collar turned down at the throat; and the neat, long sleeves appropriate to a maidservant were pinned to her shoulder seams, so that the iceman saw the dimples in her elbow. He dallied in the kitchen as long as he could, looking in at the door of the pantry.

But Eloise did not look at the iceman. She was making a green-and-pink salad, because she loved what was pretty. She loved her own arms, which were round and white, with one brown mole, like satin. Washing and scrubbing in her own home had made her hands coarse. She did not look at them; they were her only blemish. On a hot day the maid was at her prettiest, for her flesh was not soft or her skin sallow, like those of the young woman who was visiting Mrs. Dorr; but face, throat,

and breast had the firmness and the color of the large pink-and-white apples that ripen in June.

She finished the salad and dried her hands. Still Mr. John Dorr had not come to luncheon. While she waited, the maid looked through the smoke of chops at the cook. The cook was stout, with huge, flabby forearms scarred by burns; her dull eyes were yellow and bloodshot from the heat of innumerable dinners; the texture of her face was due to the beer with which she had relieved the dreary monotony of twenty years' domestic service. As Eloise observed these things, she thought of Harry.

Harry was a queer fellow, always in a froth because some people had not their chance in the world. Eloise had known him all her life.

"When your eyes gits burnt out like mine, mebbe you'll know enough to keep the wind off the gas range," shrilled the cook. And then, as Eloise still watched her absently, "Shet that door close to ye, ye little fool!"

The door was one leading through a side entry to a shaded porch and thence to the motor drive. John Dorr was coming up the drive at last.

"Make haste and crack yer ice, Ella," ordered the cook. "There's Jack, for his lunch. And Helen come an hour ago." When in the kitchen, she did not make use of titles.

Eloise wrapped the ice in a towel and took the hammer; but she listened,

as she worked, to sounds in the front of the house. She heard Jack's laugh. Presently, whistling a theater song, he pushed open the door of the pantry.

"Ella, I'm dying for a drink."

Now, there was a cooler in the hall at which he could have satisfied his thirst, and the maid knew this. Her eyes grew brilliant, her cheeks almost the color of the celluloid pin in her hair. The name "Ella," which had been substituted for her own because "Eloise" was inappropriate to a maid, seemed far too commonplace and work-a-day for her. She snatched from the young man the glass he had picked up. "Don't use that old tumbler. It ain't fit!" she exclaimed.

Her hand had brushed his in taking it; he had a large, well-shaped hand, brown on the back, soft and white inside. His eyes, blue gray and cool, were on the warm throat above the white shirt waist.

"What's the matter with the glass?" he asked.

"It's ugly. Besides, it's cracked, and they say cracked dishes are unhealthy to use."

Eloise took part of the ice prepared for the salad and put it into one of the handsomest glasses.

"You're Ella's pet, Mr. John," sneered the cook, and the maid winced at the vindictive note in her voice.

"Well, can't I be your pet, too?" he called to her, across the smoke of food. Motherless since he was ten years old, he had always found companionship with maidservants.

The cook was mollified.

"Kape yoursilf out of my kitchen," she ordered. "I'll not have ye underfoot. But if it's fritters ye mane, I made some—pineapple. Will that do?"

"Pineapple fritters! I'll love you forever, Katy."

But he was smiling into the eyes of the maid. John Dorr was a college-bred fellow of twenty-seven or eight,

so sunburned that the fair flesh showed in a sharp line on his neck and at the edges of his hair, his trophy of the athletic field.

The dish pantry was so small that the maid could scarcely move her arm without touching his white flannel shoulder—so the ice hammer slid to the floor. Instantly he stooped to restore it. And the young girl waited, her head thrown back, princesslike.

But the pantry door opened, and John Dorr's young stepmother appeared.

"Why don't you serve luncheon, Ella? Mr. John is in a hurry."

John Dorr did not restore the hammer to the waiting maid, but laid it on the table and went away.

Eloise was hurt to the quick. She pulled the long sleeves down over her white arms with the dimples and the single satiny blemish. A few minutes later she entered the dining room with the chops.

John Dorr did not look at her, but seemed absorbed in the Persian cat that rubbed herself against his brown silk ankle.

"Your father said he didn't need you this afternoon," remarked Mrs. Dorr. "So I suppose you will be taking Helen for a motor drive."

John Dorr assented.

"But he doesn't want to go! He doesn't want to go!" triumphed the maid in her heart.

As she was returning to the dining room with the salad, she heard Mrs. Dorr inquire:

"Don't you think my dining-room maid a perfect piece of bric-a-brac, Helen?"

Eloise paused, breathless, to hear the reply.

"Ye-es," responded the visitor, "for a woman of that class, she is quite nice looking."

The maid pushed open the door with her tray. In her red-brown eyes was

a curious glow; she had beautiful eyes, sometimes moody and intense, sometimes joyous as a child's. And her hair, of the same color, was worn in a coronal braid around her head. At its roots appeared a tinge of red, as if life struggled through it.

John Dorr did not look at her. But he did not look, either, at the tall, fallow girl who was visiting his mother.

As Eloise scraped the dishes in the pantry, she looked down at her coarse hands. Helen's were the finest she had ever seen—slender, with long and delicate fingers between which was visible a shimmer of pink, and covered with beautiful rings.

"Well," remarked the cook, "I guess you won't have to wait on Jack at table much longer. Him and Helen'll be married in the fall."

"I don't know whether he's engaged or not—and neither do you," retorted Eloise.

"I know the signs. I see 'em together. And he calls her 'Helen' before anybody."

"That's nothing. He calls me 'Ella.'"

"Well, but *she* ain't no *servant girl*," viciously snapped the cook. "She's got scads of money. Dorr has kep' her money in trust for her ever since she was a little kid. Besides, she's a sweet girl as ever I see, and I say Jack's lucky to get her. He ain't never looked at no other girl," pointedly.

Eloise was silent.

"Though some has thought he was lookin' at 'em, because they hadn't no sense."

As it was the maid's afternoon out, she could escape up the back stairs to her room.

She had her wages that day, and was carrying all to her parents. Carrying her wages home was the purest joy of her life, the pleasure that only the very poor can know. As she stuffed the money—one bill and the rest in small

silver—into her papery leather bag, her heart beat high with enjoyment.

Again and again, while she dressed, she glanced at the bag, once looking inside to enjoy the sight of the money. She put on a new white frock with lace in the round neck and about the very short sleeves. This was the only expenditure she had made for herself in many months. She had made the dress unaided, in the evenings; and though the stuff was coarse, it had a grace that can be given only by the girl who loves dress.

Well satisfied with her appearance, Eloise went out the kitchen way and around the house. As she paused to draw on her white lisle-thread gloves, she saw Helen standing near the porch waiting for the motor. Eloise noticed the lavish white plume on the other girl's hat, but she had never thought of having a plume like that. It was Helen's foot that caught her eye and hurt her—a slender foot, all white leather and white silk, sinking into the pile of the porch rug. The maid also wore fancy shoes, but with cotton stockings that wrinkled over the ankle. She realized, suddenly, and a look of frank dislike passed between the two girls.

Then Helen smiled coldly.

"Do you go and see your mother every afternoon out, Ella?"

"Yes, I always go home."

"How nice for you!"

Helen dismissed her by turning her back and smiling at Jack, who was approaching in the car. Once more her eyes swept the coarse clothes of the maid, so like her own in style. She exchanged a swift look with Jack.

Eloise went on. She was thinking of the odor of violets, faint, yet insistent in its appeal to the senses, shed by Helen's hair and her gown. At the corner drug store, she paused and looked at some bottles with greenish contents and flowery labels, stoppered with white kid, but she did not go in;



Helen smiled coldly. "Do you go and see your mother every afternoon out, Ella?"

she would not break the wages she was taking home.

And she did not take a trolley, as the cook did on her afternoon out. Walking down the avenue, she saw other maids out for their afternoons, all dressed in their best. It came to her with a start—as often when she had been thinking of something else—that she, too, was a housemaid. Her father and mother had been very ambitious for her and had tried to educate her to teach in the city schools, which was what Harry had advised for her. But she had got only as far as the second year in the high school. Then she had

clerked a while in a department store, but had brought no money with which to help at home.

For several blocks she went past handsome, comfortable homes like the Dorrs'. Then she went through a really fashionable neighborhood, where all the houses stood in huge blocks of green. Beyond these came a stretch of open road, where her white canvas shoes grew brown with dust; then railroad tracks; then a row of small, cheap houses—and she was at home.

At the doorway she saw the reason why she had not been able to finish the high school. Her father, who had been

a cement worker and who had contracted rheumatism in his work, sat drawn up in a rocking-chair, his gnarled hands twitching in their enforced idleness. Eloise kissed him and went to her mother, who was finishing shirts for a sweatshop. Into the calico lap of the old woman, she poured her wages—the silver and the bill. Her eyes were shining.

"'Loise, you keep some of your money this time," her mother protested. But they were hard pressed; she looked hungrily at the girl's wages. "Ain't you needing some clothes?"

No—Eloise confessed no needs. Her heart expanded in the atmosphere of her own home, where she was a princess, the only child of the house.

Her father and mother were sometimes hungry, but there was never a lack on the occasion of the girl's afternoon out. Her mother had baked a cake that day, and Harry had sent a present of a chicken.

"Harry's coming to supper, too," said the old woman, rejoicing in her festal preparations.

But the girl looked down.

"Oh!" she exclaimed. "Mother, what made you?"

"Made me do what?"

"Invite Harry."

"What's that about Harry?" inquired the young man himself, at the door.

His full name was Henri Lodovsky. He was a slender fellow, with dark, roving eyes. At nineteen, he had begun to edit a paper in a basement, which he shared with a Jewish clothes merchant. He had made the venture partly because he could not get work as a printer; but he had the quickness, the wit, of many boys who grow up on the street. His paper had sold rather well, as amusing things do; and now he had moved to a better location and had employed two printers.

Eloise flushed deeply at his question. She could not have told Henri of the

curious change that had come over her feelings of late—how she shrank, now, from the companions of her old life and longed for fineness, for delicacy, for perfume, for all that she saw at the Dorrs'.

"Come in, Henry," she said at last.

He drew something from his pocket.

"A present for you," he said—and smiled.

Henri had a charming smile, tremulously reminiscent of the sufferings of his boyhood. He had always given gifts to Eloise. When she was a tiny child and he a newsboy, he had sometimes fed her when she was very hungry. He had protected her from the bulldogs and the bad boys of the slum. And he had asked only to look at her, in return. She was, perhaps, the only thing of beauty that had come into his life.

"You said you liked perfume," he said, "so I thought you might like this."

Eloise drew the stopper from the bottle and drank the fragrance, ecstatically.

"Oh, I do, I do!" she cried. "You're too good to me, Harry!"

Her conscience pricked sharply; for she knew that he loved her—and how could she marry a man of the slum?

"The big dailies are stealing Harry's editorials," chuckled her father. "And, by jinks, the *Times-Democrat* has made him an offer!"

"Oh—Harry!" exclaimed Eloise wishfully.

But he shook his head. His charming black eyes grew grave and soft.

"I couldn't do their work," he said. "I belong down here in the Hollow."

Yes, he belonged to the slum!

"But I do not!" bitterly thought Eloise.

It made her angry to think that Harry's paper was so popular among the poor.

She wished, that night, that he would

let her go home alone—he, who belonged to the slum. But he took her, on the trolley, to the Dorrs', and did not leave her till she had stepped on her employer's porch.

From a hammock on the side porch, John Dorr stepped into the light as she approached. Eloise went by him into the house.

It was dark in the rear hall, and still; every one was asleep. John had followed her, and as he stood beside her, she heard him breathe quickly. For some reason she felt afraid. She put out her hand to the light switch. As the light flooded the place, she stood smiling at him. Then she turned and ran up the rear staircase to her room.

There she sat a long while on the floor, half undressed. Her shoulders gleamed in the moonlight. She pressed her chin, rosy and soft, on her smooth arms. Her heart beat loud against the window sill.

She drew out the little vial with the white kid stopper and delighted herself with its fragrance.

The next afternoon, when the cook had gone for her afternoon out and the luncheon dishes were done, Eloise drenched the front of her shirt waist with perfume.

Now and then, as she shelled peas in the porch, she bent her head to smell her perfume. It was a pretty back porch, from which steps went down to a scrap of lawn, with nasturtiums, sweet peas, and butterflies. Mrs. Dorr and Helen were out; the house was so still that Eloise could hear the dining-room clock.

At four, John came in at the side door, whistling. Presently he appeared in the kitchen and took some ice from the refrigerator. Then he wandered about the house a while—but returned.

"Let me help." He put his fingers into the basket of peas. As his hand touched her arm—which was cool as satin—she laughed flutteringly. Lights

flickered in her brown eyes. In the cold gray of his were shadows.

Finally she rose, with one arm curved around the rim of the bright new pan, flashing like silver where the sun touched it through the vines. A few peas fell from the pan, but she did not see; her breast rose and fell rapidly.

A bee came near her eyes and she drove it away with a white flicker of the lids. It returned.

"It thinks you're a flower," said John huskily.

Again it was driven away. Eloise put her arm over her head against the warm brown of her hair, curved backward so that the blue veins showed. Blue veins, also, appeared on her temples.

"Yes, it thought you were a sweet pea." Jack stood beside her. "But no—I ought not have said that. Sweet peas are like dressed-up, ugly women. You are a rose—thick, pink, perfumed. Stand still. I'll catch the bee."

While the peas trickled unseen from the pan, he caught and crushed the bee. Eloise smiled into his eyes. They did not move. He was pale and his hands trembled. Suddenly she turned and ran past him into the kitchen. She heard him follow her, but did not turn.

Then he caught her to him. She breathed quickly. One of his hands held her arm, and she felt the pressure of his fingers, cruelly hard. He kissed her lips and eyelids. With her face against his shoulder, she heard the ticking of his watch, and felt, through her cotton dress, the beating of his heart.

Her perfume went up to him—not elusive, like Helen's, but overpoweringly sweet. At the thought of Helen, a kind of physical revolt came over him. Because he had never been clever at school, his father believed he could settle things like this for him. His fingers shut savagely on the maid's wrist.





"Well, shall I break his nose for you?" he asked.

A few tears fought their way through the girl's heavy eyelashes.

"Let me go," she whispered. "Jack—you hurt me so!"

The front door of the house opened and a soprano voice floated through. Mrs. Dorr was singing a love song. Jack's arm about Eloise relaxed; and now they both saw the bright tin pan overturned on the floor, the matting covered with peas.

Then Mrs. Dorr reached the kitchen. At sight of the peas and of Jack's face, her song ceased.

"Don't come in, Mrs. Alice," said her

stepson. "I knocked the pan from Ella's hand, and I'm picking up her peas."

As Mrs. Dorr turned away, she sent a sharp glance toward the maid. And Jack followed her without a word.

Eloise returned to her work.

"He loves me," she thought. "Why, *he loves me!*" And it was wonderful to her—like chiffon and velvet, perfume and jewels. "He loves me. And now what next?"

After dinner, leaving a few dirty kettles for morning, she went to sit at the kitchen door in the dark. But when

she heard John coming to her, she sprang up in the doorway, the light from within all yellow around her.

John's face was darkly flushed. He had the beaten look that always came to him when his father was about; his father was a clever lawyer, and John had not been able, though he had stayed for seven years, to get through college.

"I guess, Ella," he began, "you know what I've come for. It was to—to explain what I—what happened this afternoon."

The maid's face became grave and quiet, with a fixed smile.

"Go on."

"I just wanted to say—to tell you—I hope you won't be unsettled in your place by this. Of course if any person knew about it, you can see how you'd be talked about. And it won't do you any harm if you just keep it to yourself."

"Was that what you came for? To ask me not to tell?" Her voice cut short, like the sound of a whip.

As it struck him, he flinched.

"Oh, Ella," he cried fiercely, "don't be angry with me! Get ready and go out to the park car line, and I'll meet you there. Let's go out to the park and—talk."

She would have run into the house, but his fierce hands fell on her wrists. He continued to implore; he held her in his arms and kissed her. She struck at him savagely. Then his father came toward the garage, and she was suddenly free.

She did not stop even to change her clothes or get her hat, but just as she was, ran out through the alley.

Beyond the pleasant homes of the avenue were flats and boarding houses, on the steps of which women in pretty

frocks sat gossiping. Eloise hurried by them.

At first she shed a few tears, but soon the desire to weep left her. She reached the business part of town and turned down a side street. It was almost nine by a pawnbroker's clock, but Harry would be in his printing shop at work.

She sank on a wooden box beside him and began to sob.

"Oh, Harry, I can't bear it!"

"Bear what?"

"Service."

"Why, 'Loise, it's the finest thing in the world. The day's coming when people who aren't in service won't be endured in this world."

But Henri Lodovsky was wise; he understood, without being told, what had happened.

"Well, shall I break his nose for you?" he asked.

She started, looked up, and saw him laughing with his eyes. He was not jealous. He knew it was not really Jack who had lured her away from him. Why, Eloise had loved *him* since she was a baby.

She put out her hand to him, and Harry held it, just as he used when taking her across a street in her starved slum babyhood. She knew that he would find the best path for her now.

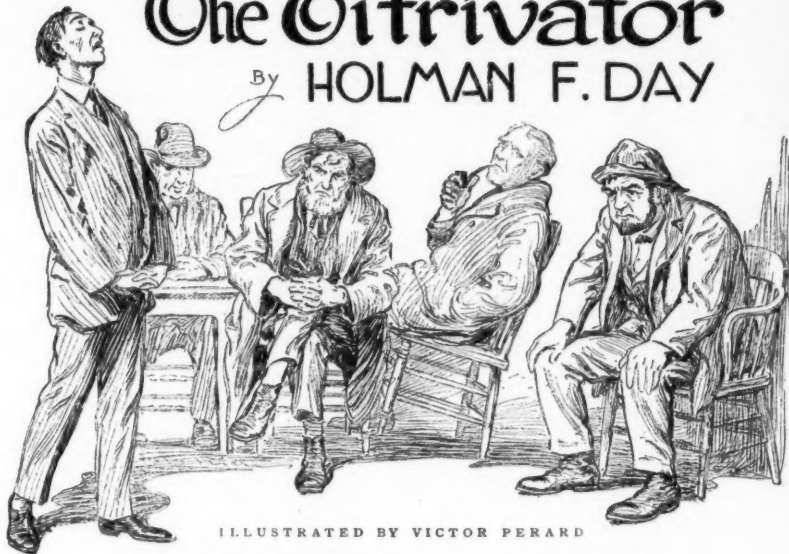
He did not urge her, that night, to marry him; he knew it was a bad bruise she had, on her woman's heart. But he knew that it would heal. And he said, to help it, "'Loise, I love you;" then let her shake her head.

But in the end, the dining-room maid did marry this very great servant of men. Henri had his enthusiastic admirers. Some of these did not like his marriage, and protested that the man might have had any one, had he but realized. How could they understand?



# The Titrinator

By HOLMAN F. DAY



ILLUSTRATED BY VICTOR PERARD

In which Cap'n Sproul gets into a real scrape upcountry, and is initiated into some of the mysteries of civic betterment.

ALTHOUGH it was a bit peckish outside and an autumn rain was lancing the chill air, Cap'n Aaron Sproul plunged forth. He muttered irefully his conviction that he would rather go and sit behind a cookstove in hell than remain any longer that afternoon in the hotel "office" of the Palermo House—locale Palermo Corners.

He had sea boots, oilskins, and a sou'wester, so he was all right outwardly; he was kept warm inwardly by a hot sense of resentment. After a sojourn of a week, he had decided that he liked Palermo Corners considerably less than he had liked the worst places he had ever visited in his circuit of the seven seas. Engaged as he was in trying to settle, as his wife's agent, the estate of a deceased aunt, he had wrathfully registered his opinion in a

letter back home that the people of Palermo had been naturally born murderers and had settled down as sneak thieves simply because of lack of opportunities.

Right at this point in the narrative, therefore, belongs some mention of Professor Buzzelle Blagden, though Professor Blagden does not step upon the scene just yet. Out of his intense dislike for everything in Palermo was born Cap'n Sproul's sudden and rather extraordinary liking for the professor; for the cap'n had never before hooked up with strangers and when, contrary to all his rules, he did—

The cap'n, clumping down the street, his rubber boots squashing big prints in the mud, decided to take to the fields. He didn't like mud, he was not afraid of the water in the field runways, and he didn't want to bump into any

Palermo citizens. Furthermore, in spite of the weather, this would be a good opportunity to give the back lots of the estate a going over. So he swished through the wet clover of the second growth, letting the rain pelt his hat and the bushes swat him with moisture-sodden branches. He made wide circuits across meadow and through wood and then swung back toward the highway. In a little clearing, he stubbed his toe against something that was hidden by the dead grass and fell over the obstruction. He got upon his knees and investigated and found that he had been tripped by an old slate gravestone.

He plucked a handful of grass and scrubbed the face of the stone. Its inscription interested him:

Here Lies  
Lieut. Jonathan Blagden,  
Late of U. S. Navy, War of 1812.

I met our foemen on the sea.  
I would not bow the servile knee.  
I fought to save our Liberty.  
I rest for blest Eternity.

There was another prostrate stone and the cap'n dug it out of the grass. Its legend was:

Joanna,  
Consort of Lt. J't'n Blagden.

About her hero did she twine,  
Then faded as doth fade the vine.

"Those 'I's' might indicate that he considered himself more or less of a trellis in this world," pondered the cap'n; "that is, providing he wrote his own epitaph. I'd like to write a few for some of the critters in this town. I wouldn't waste any poetry on 'em, either." He read the lines on the larger stone once more. "Navy, eh? A lieutenant, too. Well, old gent, I touch my hat to you. It doesn't seem just right for you to be buried away up here two hundred miles from tidewater. But considering that you sailed the seas in your day as I have in mine, I don't hold any grudge because I nigh broke

my neck over your gravestone. I reckon I'll prop 'em up before I leave town. The rest of the snails in this place will never do it. This old sir down underfoot, here, is nearer alive than most of 'em."

He went on his way.

A few rods farther brought him to the road and he climbed the fence, intending to tramp back to the village.

A bedraggled horse was tugging a top buggy along the road and the driver, hidden by the top, pulled up sharply. Cap'n Sproul began to get his mouth into shape to bellow wrathful refusal to ride to the village; he did not propose to be buttoned up with any Palermo citizen.

But the man put his head out past the top spreader and the cap'n promptly perceived that this was no native. The stranger wore a plug hat and gold-bowed spectacles and an affable smile, and he had a mild voice and a meek and appealing way and a polite air. Cap'n Aaron Sproul was so astonished that he was visibly disconcerted. His surprise had much to do with his sudden capitulation to the man's charming manner.

"I am a stranger in town," purred the man in the carriage. "But along here——"

"So'm I a stranger," stated the cap'n.

"I am sorry, then, that I have bothered you."

"No bother caused—not at all," declared the cap'n with great amiability.

"I will not trouble you further, for you probably cannot help me."

"I'll be glad to help, if there's anything I can lay my hand to."

"Oh, no, only somebody who is very familiar with this town can help me. I want to find the private burial ground of an ancestor of mine. I was directed to this road and——"

"Man by the name of Lieutenant Jonathan Blagden?"

"Exactly!"

"I have just stubbed my toe over his gravestone. Right up yonder—a little way through those bushes."

The man peered out over the rubber blanket which came nearly to his chin, and the rain slashed streaks across the nap of the silk hat.

"You're going to get wetter'n sop if you try to walk up there," remonstrated the cap'n.

"Yet, now that I am here, I think I'll try it. I am writing our genealogy and I need the inscriptions."

"Say, look here! Keep your setting, elder," cried the cap'n, moved to a gallantry that astonished him even as he volunteered. "Those stones have tumbled down—they're all loose on the ground. You don't have to go to the graveyard—the graveyard will come to you. I'll gaffe up one of those stones under each arm and bring 'em to you."

And he hurried away while the man in the carriage was protesting.

He brought both stones and struggled over the fence with them, setting one against the carriage wheel and holding up the other close to the descendant's nose.

"I'll hold it so that you can copy it," said the cap'n. "It ought to read well in a book."

"I truly am at a loss for words," declared the beneficiary. He fumbled for his pencil and notebook. "This kindness and courtesy—"

"Only too glad to do it for anybody with a sailor ancestor, sir. I've been a sea captain for the most of my life. Know what the breed is. Can you see all right?"

He hoisted his knee to prop the stone, but his hands slipped on the wet slate and down thudded the heavy block, smashing onto his foot.

"Damn the byjoosly thing!" roared the cap'n, with such volume of sound that the horse jumped forward and the wheel of the carriage went over his other foot and the propped gravestone

was dislodged and banged against his shins. The man in the carriage grabbed the reins and yanked so vigorously that the animal surged backward, and once again the wheel passed over the cap'n's foot.

He was unable to stand on his tortured extremities; he staggered to a wayside boulder and sat down on it.

"What in the devil are you trying to do, elder?" he bellowed in an ecstasy of sudden anger.

"I was not conscious——"

"And between you and your family gravestones, that's about the state I'm in, myself. I didn't mean to swear in front of an elder, but——"

"I am not a clergyman, sir."

"I'm glad of it! That helps the situation a little," grumbled the cap'n, holding first one foot and then the other.

"I'm sorry, and I'll do what I can to help you. I'll take you to your home and——"

Cap'n Sproul was not to be placated.

"That would be a hundred-mile drive and I ain't asking for so much. I'm doing a term in a tavern down the road. They call it a tavern, but it's more like a combination calaboose and insane hospital—grub and company considered. No, you needn't get out to help me! I reckon I can hobble there."

He picked up a stray stake beside the boulder and managed to push the gravestones to one side of the road. Then, with the stake as a crutch, he got to the carriage and crawled in, the stranger clucking all sorts of sympathetic expressions. He explained to the sullen cap'n that he was headed for the tavern, also.

"I have come to the town of my ancestors on a certain mission—a labor of love, as I consider it."

"They need missionaries here, all right. Like I need liniment for my feet. But the liniment will soak into me. If you get anything through the



"What in the devil are you trying to do, elder?" he bellowed in an ecstasy of sudden anger.

hides here, you'll be doing better than I think you can."

When they arrived at the tavern, the cap'n parried all questions gruffly. They helped him struggle upstairs to his room and he sent for embrocations and told the landlord to serve up his supper in the room.

The landlord brought a request along with the supper.

"It's from that elder who picked you up on the road. He wants to call on you after you've et."

"He ain't an elder," blustered the cap'n, glad of an excuse to rag somebody.

"Well, he wears a white necktie and a tailed coat."

"So does a medicine faker."

"If he ain't an elder, what is he?—seeing you seem to know. He wants to board with me."

"Do your own asking. I ain't in the census business. If he wants to come up here, tell him to come."

So the stranger came. He took the third chair in the room. The cap'n sat on one and had his bandaged feet on another.

"Do they pain you?" asked the visitor with gentle solicitude.

"Like——" The cap'n failed to find



a mild word to supplant the one he had in mind, and nodded.

"I've been thinking about how we met and the circumstances of our first acquaintance, and they are so truly extraordinary that I crave to know you better. I am a great believer in what men call luck and chance and fortune, not knowing what else to call the mysteries that produce certain results for humans in the universe. I have made a study of the subject along occult lines."

"I can't say that I have ever studied the thing," averred the cap'n, "but perhaps I have learned at least one thing without studying. If you ever see me juggling any more ancestors' grave-stones on a wet day, you can make up your mind that my memory has gone back on me."

"And yet you will own that the affair is so odd that we are more interested in each other than is ordinary when men meet along the paths of life. I learn that you are Captain Aaron Sproul, retired shipmaster."

"If that's all they told you downstairs, I'm getting off lucky," growled his host.

"Permit me to hand you my card. It will reveal more or less in regard to my identity."

The cap'n took the proffered bit of pasteboard and read as follows:

Professor Buzzelle Blagden, Expert in Civics. Municipal Research Work a Specialty. Commissioner for Improvement of Rural Life.

"A general titrivor, eh?" commented the cap'n.

"A what?"

"A Handy Andy in straightening folks out, so I should judge."

"I make only modest claims for myself," returned the professor sweetly. "But I feel that my work is important. The folks of rural communities live in such close contact that they develop

grudges, get into ruts of misunderstanding, allow petty quarrels to destroy the sweetness of intercourse socially. My mission is to readjust conditions, to waken the better sentiments, to bring folks together into relationships which elevate instead of depress, remembering always that smiles will thaw what anger has hardened."

"I'm sorry we can't have you operate in my town."

"But why can't I?"

"Because you'll never finish your job in Palermo."

"Oh, I'm sure you take too gloomy a view of the situation, captain," smiled the reformer.

"Mebbe your own specs will be tinted a mite after you have set around here and listened to 'em like I have. Any community that will take the only meetinghouse in the place to do their fancy scrapping over gets its rating, so far as I'm concerned; no other details needed."

"Ah, I understand better the few words I just heard downstairs."

"Few words! The row has been going on for ten years, and they're still at it just as hot as ever. They've got so in this town that when they ballot for a president of the United States, they divide on that meetinghouse row instead of on political lines. You'd better not try to straighten the thing out. They wouldn't have anything else left to live for."

"But their church!"

"Yes, their union meetinghouse! Good name for it, eh? Ten years ago, lightning struck it and knocked off the cupoly, and when they started repairs, they took sides on whether to have a steeple or a tower. Up to date, they hain't got either. One side stole the organ to spite t'other side. Other side stole the bell to get even. Then the pew owners took sides against the pew renters and claimed property and filled the meetinghouse full of hay. And

that's the way she stands. Ten years of fight, and still hot at it!"

Professor Blagden indulged in his little cluck of deprecation.

"I see that you have unerringly put your finger on the core of the trouble, Captain Sproul. As a student of social conditions, I always search for that. Something told me that the old town needed me! I'll begin my work in the morning."

The cap'n did not seem to entertain any enthusiastic hopes, but he did listen with lively interest to Professor Blagden's subsequent chatty discourse on many subjects. The guest seemed to have knowledge on a wide range of matters. Especially did he deal with subjects connected with the supernatural and expressed his full belief in such mysteries. All of Cap'n Sproul's sailor belief and mariner's superstitions were enlisted on that side. He was infinitely glad to meet up at last with an educated man who could give him what appeared to be something more than guesswork. Professor Blagden delved back into ages past and told the cap'n stories of occult matters that had received the sanction of wise men.

"I've always known of it and believed in it," declared the entranced listener, "but I have never had anybody open the main hatch on it before. I've had men look at me like I was a lunatic when I've told 'em that I always dreamed out the anchorage of a strange port the night before I entered."

"A fairly common phenomenon of second-sight, captain," was the professor's earnest assurance.

"Do you think I've got it?" There was a touch of awe in the cap'n's tones.

Outside, the storm wind soughed through tossing trees and whummled in the window cracks; the rain whipped the panes.

"Probably not in a workable state of development when you are awake. Your physical senses are untrained and

overbalance the mysterious hidden sense. But you are undoubtedly a very sound sleeper, and all your senses are then so subordinated that the other sense has full play. In my own case, as a student, I have trained my senses considerably, though I do not claim full control."

He grew more earnest and leaned forward.

"I hope our friendship will continue, Captain Sproul. It began queerly and I took a fancy to you."

"Same here," confessed the cap'n.

"From time to time, on occasions, you may note something which the fleshly and prosaically practical might consider odd in my thoughts and actions. But now that you are informed that I am a student of the occult, you will understand."

"Exactly!" said the cap'n heartily.

"I am subject to sudden periods of abstraction—not having the senses under full control, but constantly improving as I study and experiment. I know you will bear with me."

"Sartin sure I will, professor! I have spells of my own when I can't figger myself out—especially when something comes up to mad me."

They shook hands on that understanding, and the professor went away to his own room, leaving Cap'n Sproul eminently satisfied with Blagden, descendant, though his feet ached awfully from the impact of the gravestone of Blagden, ancestor.

The feet were not in shape for locomotion next day, and the cap'n was mighty glad when the professor dropped in.

"I have something to show you, Cap'n Sproul—something interesting, though the vulgar would probably class it under the head of superstition."

"I am superstitious, myself—can't help being!" declared the mariner. "If ever I walked past a dead rat on the

water front without spitting three times — Well, I never did, that's all."

Professor Blagden placed a pebble of the size of a chestnut in the cap'n's hand. It was white, striated with pale-blue streakings. It was smooth and glossy.

"That," explained the professor, "is a lucky stone—a real lucky stone."

The cap'n turned it over and over.

"What's the idea of it?"

"It brings its possessor—provided its possessor is the rightful one—good fortune and averts evil influences. There are not many real lucky stones in the world. That is, there are not many people who connect with the right stone to bring them luck. There are not many people who are able to distinguish a lucky stone. Now let me tell you something that's especially interesting. This lucky stone came down straight to me from my ancestor, Lieutenant Blagden, whose gravestone was so unlucky for you yesterday. He got it from old Bomazeen, an Indian chief, and he went through all kinds of peril by land and sea and died ashore at a good old age. It wouldn't be a lucky stone for you, but it's a lucky stone for me because it was passed on to me from one of my blood. And if it ever ceases to be a lucky stone for me, it will pass right out of my pocket—disappear. It will not be lost—I don't mean that. It will have finished its work—it will pass!"

The cap'n handed back the stone.

"There are times in a man's life when all comes his way and he doesn't need a lucky stone," went on the professor. "Then he gets to a certain age and there's a change in his luck as well as in his body. He may try just as hard, but everything goes against him. The world is full of examples of it, and the man doesn't know what ails him. Now yesterday you had bad luck with that gravestone. Really, nothing of the sort ought to have happened. Was that the

first piece of bad luck you have had lately?"

The cap'n scratched the side of his head and pondered.

"I cal'lute you'll have to call it bad luck to have my wife's old aunt die, seeing that I had to come up into this back porch of purgatory to settle the estate and fight the bloodsuckers who are trying to collect bills she never owed. And now that I run it over in my mind, I've had a critter cheat me on a bill of sale inside of a week, and the buildings on a farm I held a mortgage over burned and the land pirate had lied to me about renewing his insurance. I reckon that's all."

Just then the landlord came hurrying in with a telegram.

"No, it ain't all, either," yelled the cap'n, giving the missive hasty perusal. "The *Martha P. Gleason* has been wrecked in the Sound by this blow, and I owned a thirty-second into her."

The landlord retired with curiosity satisfied, though he did hanker to know what the thirty-second of a schooner meant in money.

Professor Blagden tiptoed to the cap'n and whispered in his ear:

"The change has come in your affairs. You need a lucky stone. Otherwise, you will march on to ruin."

In spite of the state of mind into which his conferences with the professor had put him, Cap'n Sproul's natural vigor of common sense wrestled within him. Furthermore, his temper had just been stirred by news of a considerable loss.

"Say, look here, you! Don't try to rub too much of that into me!"

"But I am a student. I know."

"You may be able to titrivate a hayseed town, but you can't save vessel property in a blow by waving a rock at it—not if the rock was luckier'n the one David used to kill old Goliath!"

"But if I can prove to you—if you have the talisman in your possession—

if the tide turns and good luck comes—you must believe, then!"

"Well, of course I ain't setting my knowledge up against yours," admitted the cap'n, calming down and feeling a little ashamed of his heat in the face of the other's charming mildness.

"We must not question the wisdom of the sages of yore, Captain Sproul. Men are what we may call smart in this day and generation, but they are not profound in the mysteries. I insist that you must secure a lucky stone. You must go out this night and dig."

The cap'n stared at him.

"It is, of course, merely a temporary expedient. The stone loses its virtue quickly. But it will help to stave off trouble until we can take steps to secure the real one."

"What did you say I had got to do?"

"Dig—dig at midnight! It's a secret that not many know. I have guarded it carefully. If a person goes out and digs promptly on the stroke of midnight, he will discover that the first pebble he happens on will be peculiar in shape or in its markings or in something. He must put that stone in his pocket and it will serve him for a short time. But as soon as possible, I'll be able to do something better for you, I'm sure. I have a little investigation to make first, but I'm quite sure I am on the trail of a real lucky stone for you."

After the professor had gone and his winning presence no longer shed its glamour on the subject, Cap'n Sproul angrily reflected that he must be getting wrong in the head to have listened so patiently.

However, that evening after a talk, the professor again put the spell upon his acolyte. He pulled aside the curtain and pointed to the gibbous moon and explained that the phase was propitious, providing the digging was done with the left hand. The right hand was to be used on the waxing moon.

"There's no use for me to keep vigil with you," said the teacher of mysteries. "You must dig alone—exactly on the stroke of twelve. I see clearly that you have not overcome all your doubts. It's all new to you, sir. I do not resent your hesitation. I only ask you to try it."

After the professor had retired, Cap'n Sproul tested out his ability to walk easily and discovered that his rest and his course of treatment had done much for him; there was merely a little tenderness in the foot on which the stone had landed.

He declared stoutly to himself that he had not made up his mind to commit any such folly as the professor had advised; then he sat down and read faithfully and long in a book entitled "The Psychology of Dreams," loaned to him by his mentor.

At a quarter to twelve he put on his coat and hat, picked up the stove shovel, and started out of his room. His bandaged feet were excellently muffled.

All the tavern lights were out and the village was dark, except for the moon's light.

Without shoes the cap'n was not equipped for a very long ramble; so he merely dropped around to the back of the tavern after he had unbolted the door and let himself out into the night. He lighted a match and held it to his watch. He waited and again lighted a match in order to make sure of the exact time. It was necessary to scratch several more before the slow hands marked the midnight hour. He tossed the last match away in great haste and began to dig with all his might, for the minute hand was exactly on the nick.

The next instant the shovel was yanked roughly away from him and was employed by somebody to spank out a brisk fire in the shavings with which the building had been freshly banked for the winter. In his hurry to

be at work on the stroke of twelve, the cap'n had been decidedly careless with his fire. The volunteer fireman was the landlord.

He faced the flabbergasted midnight prowler.

"I've ketched ye in a State-prison crime," he gasped. "A man of your prominence! Setting fire to a dwelling house in the nighttime! My Gawd! What if I hadn't follered ye?"

"You infernal old liar! Don't you accuse me of setting a fire!"

"You done it! I heard ye and chased ye down here! Hain't I just put out that fire?"

"You have got about as much brains and honesty as the rest of the critters in this town! You dare to lie about me and I'll jug you for criminal slander, even if it takes every cent I'm worth!"

"Then what *was* ye doing here? Explain that! What *was* ye doing?"

Cap'n Sproul opened his mouth—then he promptly shut it. Explaining to that frantic countryman that he was out on a quest for a lucky stone did not appeal as a likely way of extricating himself; it occurred to the cap'n that he would rather be ranked as a criminal than as a lunatic.

"I'm out here to get a little air," he growled. "I've been penned in with the cussed boiled-dinner stink of your hotel till I had to come to the top and

"That," explained the professor, "is a lucky stone—a real lucky stone."



breathe. That's the trouble with me. I wanted a walk."

"Well, you can pick out any starry night for a ramble any time you hanker to, and I don't care if you hoof it bare-footed!" He pointed to the cap'n's bandaged feet. "But when you sneak around and try to set fire to my tavern, it's another matter, and I propose to find out about it."

"I was lighting my pipe and the match flew."

The landlord brandished the shovel in accusatory attitude.

"You was digging! You lit match after match till you got one that would set fire. Then you was digging! I don't know what for. But I've got eyes! I don't care if you're promunther than old Lord Argyle of the Scottish Isle. I'm going to have the law on ye!"

"Go ahead," invited the cap'n. He resolved to keep his mouth shut. "It's my word against yours—and if any

swivel-tongued liar from the town of Palermo can convince anybody that a man of my general reputation set a fire or was doing anything except attend to my own private and particular business, then the public ain't what I think it is." He walked back into the house. "You go sleep on this thing," he advised the landlord. "When you wake up, you'll think you were having the nightmare."

Whatever the landlord did think about the affair, he kept his opinion to himself the next day. Also, he kept his eyes on Cap'n Sproul with disconcerting persistency.

Professor Blagden grasped the first opportunity to confer with the cap'n in private.

"I trust you obeyed my instructions," he purred. "And what did you get?"

"I got suspected of trying to set fire in the nighttime and I've got that old gimlet-eyed shark of a tavern keeper chasing me around—and I've got to stand him because I don't dare to stir him up any more by cuffing his ears. I've got a plenty!"

"But the stone—to bring you luck?"

"I didn't get any," growled the cap'n. He gave curt summary of what had happened behind the tavern. "You may be lucky, Blagden, having a stone of your own. But I'll be cussed if you ain't a hoodoo to me ever since I first laid eyes on you."

He gave the other a stare of considerable disfavor.

"All I can hope for now," he went on, "is that a fire doesn't break out in this place while I'm here. If it does, they'll have me in State prison."

"I say again it all shows how badly you need a talisman to protect you. I'm sure that your horoscope would show that you have arrived at a critical time, sir. I will cast one for you right away."

However, Cap'n Sproul continued his glowering inspection of the professor.

"I don't usually take strong to any man on short notice," he grumbled. "I'll admit I have warmed up to you without exactly understanding just why I have done it. Sometimes, when you talk, I ketch myself liking you first rate; and then again when you talk, I'm a good mind to bat you side of the head for making a blasted fool of me."

It was a rough speech, but it did not so much as ruffle the smooth surface of the professor's amiability. He smiled blandly and clucked his gentle protest.

"You have inward consciousness of the truth of the mysteries, captain. You have said things to show that. But, of course, they seem new and strange at first, actual contact. You will soon become wonted if you follow my guidance." He put finger to forehead and pondered. "We must take immediate steps to shift this current of ill fortune."

"Seems to me you were telling me that you had come here to build over the folks in this town. Now suppose you tend to them and not waste so much of your vallyble time on me," the cap'n suggested sourly. "I ain't ungrateful—nor anything of the sort—and I've been interested in your talk. But I don't believe I relish being made a special case. Go ahead and titivate the others in this town. They need it."

But, according to appearances, the professor heard nothing of this little speech. He got up suddenly from his chair, bumped against the cap'n as if that indignant gentleman were invisible to him, tramped on the still tender feet on his way to the door, and walked out.

Then he returned before the cap'n had recovered his breath and inquired sweetly:

"Oh, did you say something to me?"

"Cuss your gor-righteously ha'slet!" roared the victim. "What do ye mean by walking over me like I was a husk doormat?"



"My abstraction! My abstraction!" murmured Mr. Blagden. "You will remember that I warned you regarding it. You promised to bear with me."

"You're about as safe to associate with as a daminite bomb!" thundered the cap'n.

"I'm truly sorry that I lost myself for a moment, sir. But please take into account that all my thoughts were centered on plans for your sake. I was striving with all my mental strength to help you. I will go away and strive some more."

Cap'n Sproul was in milder mood when Professor Blagden approached him in the afternoon. He had reflected and was really sorry because he had shown such nasty temper toward a man who seemed so devoted in his own peculiar way. He hastened to tell the professor as much.

"I had forgotten that you spoke crossly to me. Oh, I am so used to being misunderstood by those I am trying to help! I have gone about the town to-day probing into that miserable affair of the meetinghouse. I have tried to mediate. I have been abused roundly by both sides. You were right about the thing being the principal plague spot of the town. It is a hideous cancer which is eating out the real vitality of this place. It has fomented hatred, stopped progress, and spoiled the civic sense of honor. But enough! In my rounds I have learned something which has pleased me very much, for your sake. My team is at the door. Come with me."

In spite of his fresh resolve to be nice to Professor Blagden, the cap'n showed an apprehensive disposition to balk.

"It's only for a short ride into the country—less than a mile, I am told. We can easily be back by supper time. It's important for you, sir."

"But what—"

"I will tell you as we jog along. Surely you are willing to go for a ride

after your confinement in this smelly house."

And the cap'n decided that he was willing.

"Wonderful news," said the professor when they were outside the village. "I've heard that my Great-aunt Judith is alive. I know that her husband had a lucky stone. The Blagden family understands the virtues of such a talisman. But it helps only the males of the family."

"But I ain't in the family. If that's what this cruise is—a chase for a lucky stone—we'd better turn round right here."

The professor slapped the reins to hurry the horse.

"You shall see—you shall see, captain. You need to be convinced and you shall be. The stone will come to you by gift—and my great-uncle was the last male of his branch of the family. In such a case, the stone may be given to somebody outside and will not lose its efficacy."

But the cap'n was plainly not anxious to prosecute the quest.

"We'd better turn round," he persisted. "Probably the old lady has given it away long ago."

"Oh, no! Not at all, sir! I heard about my great-aunt this afternoon from my cousin, Lucy Stover. Only last week she saw the lucky stone on the parlor whatnot."

Resisting this mellow devotedness was like pummeling a sofa cushion; the cap'n kept still and rode on.

The professor had a meaty subject in the meetinghouse affair. He told the cap'n that he was sure nothing could be done for Palermo until the citizens were brought together on the meetinghouse dispute. Then he went on to outline his plans for social betterment, and the journey along the sumac-bordered highway was a snaillike progress because the professor allowed the horse to walk.

It was near dusk when they came to a house that, so Mr. Blagden opined, might be the residence of his great-aunt. Mr. Blagden confessed that he was not exactly sure; he had forgotten some of the directions his cousin had given him. The house was located some distance from the road and a lane led to it. The lane was deeply rutted.

"I wouldn't drive in there with dark coming on," suggested the cap'n, with mariner's caution about snaggy channels. "I need to stretch my legs and to get used to walking on my feet again. You just let me straddle up and knock and see if your aunt lives there."

"That will be very kind of you, sir. An inspiration has just come to me on the meetinghouse problem. I will do mental work on it at once. If that is Aunt Judith's house, wave your hand and I will hitch the horse and come up."

The cap'n walked carefully and slowly, for his footgear consisted of carpet slippers, the largest size he had been able to secure in the village shoe store. He scuffed along with the queer gait of a person snowshoeing. Therefore, his descent on the house looked like a sort of stealthy approach. But he knocked with vigor. Then he turned to see whether the professor was watching out for the signal. He had spoken of mental work to do and the cap'n had sudden and uneasy memory of the thoroughness of Mr. Blagden's abstraction. The abstraction was evidently in full operation just then; Mr. Blagden was whipping his horse back toward the village at a fine rate of speed.

Coincident with the opening of the door on which the cap'n's fist had thundered was the disappearance of the professor's equipage behind the wayside bushes.

"Well, I'll be jodiggered and dam-hoofered!" shouted the cap'n.

Then he faced about toward the door and confronted a man who was taking him in from head to carpet slippers.

"What do you want?" demanded the householder.

It came to the cap'n with violent conviction that he didn't exactly know what he did want—or at least that he was not prepared to say what he wanted. To tell this staring stranger that he was upcountry hunting for a lucky stone was not to his taste; he had been ashamed of his mission, anyway.

"I said, what do you want?" insisted the man.

"Nothing!"

The cap'n fully realized that this reply was a most peculiar one under the circumstances, but just then he could not think of anything sensible that he did want.

"But you have come knocking on my door."

It came to the cap'n that he might commit himself partially, on the Blagden end of the thing.

"Well, the fact is—it has just come to me," he faltered, "that I want to know where a woman named Judith lives."

"You mean Judith Blagden?"

"I think she's the one. Old lady——"

"She boards here with us—has since her husband died. Come in if you want to see her."

"Oh, I don't want to see her," protested the cap'n, quite certain that he wouldn't know what to say to Judith. "I just wanted to know where she lives. I wanted to tell her nephew."

"What nephew? Where is he?"

"He—he just drove away."

"Well, if he wants to know where his aunt is, what's his hurry?"

"I don't know. He didn't say."

The cap'n backed away and started down the steps. His thoughts were in a whirl, and he wanted to get away



He began to dig with all his might, for the minute hand was exactly on the nick.

from this staring person, conscious that he was making a bad matter worse.

"And what does he want of his aunt, anyway? Looks to me like there's something queer about this thing!"

Cap'n Sproul began his retreat.

"And you mousing around here in carpet slippers! What does——"

"You infernal pod auger, don't you try to bore into me any more! Yes, there's one thing I do want—and I'm willing to pay for it. I want to hire a team to take me back to Palermo Corners. I'll pay five dollars. Do you

want the job?" The cap'n's tone was authoritative.

"Yes, sir."

"Hitch up!"

"If you'll step into the house, you can have a few minutes with——"

"I don't want a few minutes with anybody—except one man! And the quicker you get me to the Corners, the quicker I'll see him."

"Where do you want to be dropped?" asked the charioteer, when they were on their way.

"The tavern."

Then the cap'n was conscious that he was the object of more earnest scrutiny.

"I reckon I've got you placed," vouchsafed the man.

"Huh!" grunted the fare, showing no interest.

"My brother runs that tavern."

"Better keep it a family secret. It's nothing to be bragging about."

"I was down there this morning to take eggs and butter to him."

"If that butter is anyways like what I've been getting there, you might have let it take the eggs down. It's strong enough to carry quite a load."

"I ain't going to take no offense from your slurs. I take it from whence it comes," said the driver calmly. "My brother has posted me."

"Has, eh?"

"Oh, yes. And I hope you'll keep all calm. I ain't going to stir you up."

"Look-a-here! What did he say about me?"

"It's all right, I tell you. Don't get heifered up, now."

"What did he tell you?" The cap'n roared the question. "There'll be trouble if you don't answer me!"

"Only that you're out of your head. He has ketched you in a spell. I'm glad you happened to hit my house when you got back your right senses this time," said the man soothingly, trying to manage the patient with tact.

"Do I look like a crazy man?"

"Now I don't want to get into any argument——"

"Do I look, act, or talk like a crazy man?"

"Oh, no! I excuse it all. Of course, if you had come to some houses in carpet slippers and had talked that way—— But you needn't worry about me. I'm all right. I'll get you back all safe."

"Pull up that horse," bellowed the cap'n. "Pull right up, where you are!

Here's your five dollars. I'll go the rest of the way by myself, even if I have to do it by handsprings. I'd sooner ride into that village with a polecat propped up side of me! I ain't crazy now, but I should be if I talked any longer with you," he added as he started away on foot, scuffing along the road.

He was not far from the village, for the man had hurried his horse in his anxiety to get rid of his passenger as soon as possible. The tavern office was full of loafers, as usual, and they gave him strange looks and hushed their talk when he went slap-slapping through the room. He glowered on the landlord, aware that that blab-mouth had been doing some gossiping. His impulse was strong to have it out then and there, and to finish by cuffing the slanderer's ears. But there were too many onlookers and he begrudged giving a free show for Palermo. He went on upstairs to his room and there found Professor Blagden, who was plainly excited and impatient.

"I just hurried in! I didn't find you here! I was much disappointed because I desired to give you the great news first, sir. I wondered where you could be. I——"

"Wondered where I could be, you infernal doodle bug with a dogvane head! Take me out into the country and leave me knocking on a stranger's door! Get me the reputation all over this town of being a lunatic—and I reckon I am one after messing in with you! What did you mean, going off like that?"

"Good gracious, I remember! You were with me!" exploded the professor. "I was just wondering where it was I had seen you last. But don't bother me with little details just now," he protested, putting up his hands to check the cap'n's profanity. "I have something besides little things on my mind! All at once the great idea came to me!

I don't remember where I was—it came to me!"

"I remember where I was, you——"

"It came to me! I have done it!" He strode to and fro across the room, waving his arms. "It was the right thing—the one thing to do! My thoughts—my labors here were useless until it should be done. Great urgency demands a great deed. You know what Alexander the Great did."

"No, I don't know, and I don't give a——"

"With the Gordian knot! You know what Alexander did!"

"I don't care if he untied it with his teeth. What I want to know is, what is the matter with you, anyway?"

"Until the plague spot had been plucked out, how could the old town rise to any civic heights? It could not. When the bone is taken away, dogs stop fighting. There was no hope of mediation, sir. So I have acted."

"Well, what is it?" demanded the cap'n rudely. "Get it off'n your mind so that you can listen to a little plain talk from me, do you understand? What is it, I say?"

"I have set fire to the union meeting-house—set it in the middle of the hay, so it would get a good start——"

The cap'n rushed to the window and yanked up the shade.

"So it will be all afire before anybody notices! So that the miserable monument will be utterly destroyed from the face of the earth!" shouted Professor Blagden ecstatically. "I have cut the Gordian knot for the sake of the peace of this town, and they will rise up and bless me when they recover their senses!"

A warm glow was spreading up into the autumn gloom.

Then a hoarse voice squalled: "Fi-ah!"

"It's the union meetinghouse," proclaimed somebody in the street.

"Good riddance to bad rubbage," returned somebody else.

"There! You hear that!" cried the professor. "That will be the verdict!"

"I wonder what will be the verdict if I'm arrested as a fire bug. They've got me ticketed as one already," stormed Cap'n Sproul. "The least that will be said is that I aided and abetted. Gor-ram your ding-fuddled hoodoo hide, you cussed Jonah!"

He rushed on the professor, seized him by collar and trousers' slack, and threw him out of the room.

"There! I've got that much overboard before the gale hits me," he growled.

Then, startled by a sudden idea, he hurried out into the corridor and grabbed up the cargo he had just jettisoned. He threw Mr. Blagden back into the room and followed him and closed the door. The victim retreated to a corner, fanning his hands before him limply. He seemed to apprehend that the raging cap'n proposed to keep up this game of pitch and toss. But the cap'n sat down in a chair and guarded the door.

"You'd better get that lucky stone of yours to working. You're going to need it," advised the captor. "And look here! If you open your yawp to try to come it over me any more, I'll begin to heave things at you."

There was clamor outside; flames lighted the heavens, streaming up straight in the still air. The cap'n noted with considerable relief that no other buildings were in danger.

Then he heard them coming!

The landlord's raucous voice was loudest.

"I ain't afraid of him, gents! I'll lead this bee right into his room. I tell ye he's crazy. I ketched him trying to burn up my tavern. Here's my brother! He can tell you how he come rampaging around this very afternoon in carpet slippers—crazy as a coot!"

Cap'n Sproul plucked from his waistcoat pocket the card that the professor had given him early in their acquaintanceship.

"I see by this that you are a commissioner for the improvement of rural life," he growled. "Here's a job for you right now. You improve this gang that's coming by tellin' 'em the truth!"

The crowd tramped up the stairs and stopped outside the door.

"I say again, and I swear to it," asserted a voice, "that he made me stop my hoss right near the meetinghouse and he got out and told me to drive back home. And I hadn't gone no ways at all before the sky was all ablaze."

Cap'n Sproul rose and flung open his door.

"Before you all get yourselves into a law scrape for slandering an innocent man," he shouted indignantly, "I'd advise you to listen to what that critter in the corner has to say about this." He pointed to the professor.

The professor fixed glassy, malevolent, wall-eyed stare on the cap'n. He settled about him the garments which the cap'n's clutch had disarranged.

"I have not the least idea of what this person is raving about," he declared. "He has been throwing me about as if I were a sack of potatoes. I have good reason to be thankful that you have come in season to rescue me."

For a few moments the cap'n returned Mr. Blagden's stare with blank and utter amazement. Then he cursed.

"I'll give a thousand dollars——" he began to roar.

"Just a minute!" broke in a man.

He stepped forward. He wore a constable's badge and the cap'n quailed before him. Arrest! For arson! It was horrible, but he saw no way out of the predicament.

"Maybe," drawled the officer, "maybe

there might be such a thing—from interested parties—as a ree-ward of—say—a hundred dollars for information as to just who did set that fire."

Cap'n Sproul yanked out his wallet and waved bills in the air.

"Here's a hundred for the proof."

The constable took the money.

"*He* did it," he stated. He pointed to Mr. Blagden. "I saw him go in. I peeked through the window. I saw the whole thing. And folks around here know I ain't any kind of a liar."

"Why in the name of Sancho didn't you stop him?" squealed the landlord.

"Well," grinned the constable, "it has been agreed in Palermo Corners for a good many years that if that cussed old meetinghouse took fire and burned down, it would be about the best thing that ever happened to this town. I sort of let nature take its course! And after you all get cooled off, I reckon there won't be much trouble made for anybody!"

Professor Blagden came out of his corner. He displayed enthusiastic excitement.

"It's so! It's true! I admit it! I did it! You can see I was right! It's a part of my plan of civic betterment. Listen to me, all of you! I shall stay here and show you all——"

"Hold on a minute!" cried Cap'n Sproul. He had been busy picking up his belongings. He started for the door with them under his arm. He stuffed money into the landlord's hands as he passed. "Now that you have started to improve each other in this town, I'll be getting out from underfoot. It's going to be a long job, and you won't have much time to tend to outsiders. Good night!"

And the landlord's brother chased him out and secured the job of driving him to the railroad station—having previously discovered that this peculiar person was good pay.



# Out of the Blue

By Lee Pape

Author of "The Passing of Tubby," "The Abduction of Queen Lisette," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY ALBERT HENCKE

**How a young drug clerk won a testy old major  
to his way of thinking upon an important matter.**

THEY had spent blissfully rhythmic evenings together in dance halls and at the more dressed-up quarterly balls of the Drug Clerks' Association; shoulder against shoulder they had sighed with Sothern, heaved with Hackett, and bubbled with Billie Burke; they had walked empty white streets, glowing, through winter snowstorms, and in the park's shadowy bridle paths had attended the début of their August moon. But because of her worse-than-Cerberus grandfather, never before this had he seriously proposed paying a formal call at her home.

"You've got to try it *some* time, so it might as well be now," Dora agreed doubtfully.

She was in Steinbach's pharmacy; Fred had just sold her a two-cent stamp. Perhaps Mr. Steinbach didn't appreciate it, but Fred was the reason why she always went in there to buy her stamps.

"Friday's my lucky day," said Fred. "I was born on a Friday, and Friday's pay day, and I'm very fond of fish. So maybe he won't be so bad to-night. He must have his bad, better, best fits, like everybody else."

Dora shook her head.

"Not grandfather. His go in bad, worse, worsts. So the best you can hope is one of his bad nights. Nobody's got past him now for three years. But I'll tell him you're coming, and be extra nice to him, and maybe— Well, I'll

soon be old enough to have rights of my own, so he may as well give in gracefully."

Mr. Steinbach projected his large bulk from behind the partition that screened the compounding room.

"Fred," he inquired, with grim politeness, "have you mixed that zinc ointment?"

"Just about to, Mr. Steinbach," replied Fred cheerily.

Mr. Steinbach withdrew.

"By, Freddie," smiled Dora. "I wish us luck."

"Amen," said Fred devoutly.

When Dora, with an armful of provender for supper, flew into the little two-story brick nest that was almost spacious for just the two of them, the old bird was still on the wing. When he did stump in, noisily and punctually, he was greeted first by the fragrant breath of well-made coffee and then by Dora's double peck on the little clear spaces, under each eye, that were the only spots on his tough old cheeks quite free of his great bushy white mustache. Another clear space, in the exact center of the top of his head, was a little desert hemmed in by wild flames of snowy-white hair. When all else failed, Dora kissed that one. If the storming of that defense did not bring victory, the position was impregnable.

Dora decided with inward jubilation that he was in a fine humor. And before eating, too! She set his steam-

ing supper before him—his pet dishes, meticulously prepared—and sat down to heed the call of her own perfect appetite. *Bump! Bump! Bump!* Dora started from a pleasant mental picture of Fred, his face expressing dignified nobility, and the major, wreathed in smiles, shaking hands. Her grandfather's flinty blue eyes, seeming almost to strike sparks in their concentrated wrath, were glaring at her from beneath the lowered white tangles of his eyebrows, while the floor underneath the table resounded to violent thumps of the wooden peg that did duty as his right lower leg. His coffee cup was empty!

For a moment Dora sat paralyzed. Just as everything had been looking so promising! Snatching up his cup and saucer, she fled to the kitchen. The thumping ceased, but the major's eyes, blazing with unabated ire, fastened themselves on the kitchen doorway to scorch her as soon as she should appear with the refilled cup. As she set it down before him, he let out a loud, angry grunt, followed by a succession of grunts of diminishing volume as the ambrosial liquid disappeared gulp by gulp.

Dora was not caught napping again. The next two times she was ready for the signal when he silently pushed cup and saucer an inch or so toward her, and in her zeal was even preparing, entirely on her own initiative, to get him a fifth cup, but desisted meekly at his deep-growled "Did I say so?"

After supper she fetched him his smoking jacket and his slipper. (Upstairs, a closet shelf bristled with unworn, obstinately hoarded right-foot shoes and slippers, though he had never gone quite so far as to say outright that he expected his foot ever to grow on again.) She placed the evening paper on his knees, and held a match over the crammed bowl of his big, sil-

ver-capped china pipe. Suddenly he shouted out:

"Feel in my overcoat pocket! Not *that* one, you great stupid!"

Dora tried the other one, and with a delighted squeal drew out a small white oblong package and hastily sniffed at it.

"Chocolates!" She bore recklessly down on him and planted a kiss under his right eye.

"Mind your aim!" he snorted, clutching at his pipe. "You'll never be the quiet, ladylike girl your mother was. Look at that photograph! Not even a smile! She wa'n't a day older'n you when that was took."

Dora walked over to the blue-scarfed mantel—they were still in the dining room; a red cloth on the table and a red-shaded gas lamp on the red cloth had transformed it into a living room—and musingly studied the gentle, old-fashioned face in the rectangular gilt frame.

"I *do* look like her, though, don't I, grandfather?"

The major opened his newspaper with a scornful rattle.

"You may have her eyes, and her mouth, and something of her expression, sometimes, maybe, but you'll never be the beautiful girl your mother was."

Dora fluttered onto the arm of the faded plush easy-chair into whose padding the major's stocky frame, with the passing of years, had hollowed a deep, comfortable impression of itself.

"Oh, well," she sighed, "it's all in the family, anyway. She must have had millions of young men calling on her, grandfather."

"She could 'a' had any man in the town," said the major.

"And you let them call on *her*?" asked Dora softly.

The old soldier slapped his paper down on his knees and glared up at her.

"None o' that, now! None o' your



"Mind your aim!" he snorted, clutching at his pipe. "You'll never be the quiet, ladylike girl your mother was."

hintin'! I ain't goin' to have no young scallyways lallygaggin' around here, and you know I ain't!"

"But I don't *want* any scallywags."

"They're all scallywags."

Dora sighed, and the major pulled on his pipe, which began to make little whistling, guttering noises.

"I'm nineteen years old, grandfather."

"I'm seventy-six."

"How old do you think a girl ought to be before—before——"

"Thirty, anyway."

His granddaughter rolled her eyes.

"Why not sixty?"

"Why not?" he grunted assent.

She bounced off the chair arm and went over to the picture on the mantel

again. The gentle eyes seemed to look back at her with humorous encouragement, and she kept her gaze fixed on them as she said:

"Grandfather, Fred Little is no scallywag."

"What! That young fool in the drug store? With an eyebrow on his upper lip? Sickening!"

Dora said, with some dignity:

"He graduated with highest honors from the pharmacy college, and Mr. Steinbach is going to take him into the business."

"Take him into the nursery!" the major grunted angrily. "He ought never 'a' been let out!"

The mission wall clock, for which Dora had exchanged a great wad of

saved-up soap wrappers, whirled laboriously and managed to tinkle half past seven. But somehow Dora felt that, so far, there had been no moment auspicious for announcing Fred's coming. Her grandfather resumed his reading, his pipe now singing at concert pitch. Dora watched with a sort of fascination as the clock's big brass minute hand jerked along its perpetual round.

There came a faint-hearted pull at the doorbell, followed the same second by a lusty, resolute tug that threw the old iron bell above the kitchen door into an ear-splitting panic.

"Devil's that tryin' to break the bell?" rumbled the major.

"I'll go," said Dora hurriedly. She was already at the door opening into the short hallway.

"Wait!" ordered her grandfather. He was eying her intently. Dora waited, fearfully. Her grandfather took three more puffs and then spoke. "You've got your best dress on. What for, hey?"

"Nothing, grandfather. That is—why——"

"I'll go to the door," he decided.

He worked himself out of the easy-chair and stumped through the hall. Dora hung tremulously at the dining-room door.

Just as the young man on the doorstep had begun to speculate on the advisability of having still another go at the bell, the front door suddenly opened to the width of a foot, and he found himself staring hypnotized into the burning blue eyes of Dora's grandfather.

It was a tableau that, for any apparent intention of the major to the contrary, bade fair to continue in indefinite silence. Fred found his tongue at last.

"G-good evening, Major Weeden."

He was answered by a vibrating

slam; he was staring at a blank, closed door.

"One of his worse nights," he murmured to that unresponsive article of carpentry.

He was relieved to hear from Dora, the next afternoon, that she had suffered no ill consequences from his "visit." She came into the drug store with a couple of prescriptions for Mr. Steinbach to make up.

"He gave me special instructions not to trust you with them," she told Fred.

"He knew what he was about," Fred said moodily. "I know several things I might put in 'em that they probably don't call for." He scanned the hieroglyphics. "Old friend lumbago back again, eh?"

"Lumbago *back* again! Oh, Fred, you ought to be on the stage!" giggled Dora.

"I didn't think of it that way, but I thank you just the same. I trust he didn't catch it in the draft when he opened the door to hand me the ice pitcher."

"No. He wouldn't let me close his window when it started to rain last night, though I'm positive he was just about to call me to close it for him. And this is what he gets. I punished him for what he did to you last night, Freddie. I sulked in a corner all the rest of the evening. Wouldn't even play Battle of Antietam with him after he had the match sticks all ready. He never lets on, but he feels it terribly when I sulk. And I hate to, much as he generally deserves it, because grandfather is really—really very fond of me, Fred."

Fred looked at her tenderly and was just about to say something appropriate when Mr. Steinbach appeared and was given the prescriptions. Fred delivered the medicine half an hour later. Dora took it back to the dining room, where Major Weeden, with unforgiving animosity toward the bed that had

treacherously let him sleep while lumbago crept at him through the window, was bundled up on a cot. Doctor Rockey was with him, a big, pop-eyed, solemn-looking man.

Dora unwrapped the medicine and put it on the chair beside the cot—a bottle of red stuff and a bottle of cloudy white. Her grandfather twisted his head and had a long glare.

"Red and white," he rumbled at length. "Where's the blue one?"

"No blue one," said Dora.

"What do you know about it? Where's the blue one, doctor?"

The doctor bent his unimaginative, pop-eyed gaze down on the sick man.

"Blue one? No. Why should there be a blue one?"

The major got his face into a frightful contortion.

"What are you?" he roared. "A Turk? Aie!"

"Then keep still," said the doctor heavily. "Don't thrash about, and don't talk nonsense. I'll stop in again to-morrow morning."

He gave the major an annoyed, disapproving look, picked up his hat from the table, and left. The major, who was really somewhat afraid of him, waited until the front door had sounded his departure before he shouted:

"I don't want you to-morrow morning or no time!"

"Grandfather, please!" begged Dora.

"I will if I like! And it ain't me! It's that ignorant sawbones! Fat, goggle-eyed frog! Calls himself a doctor, and don't know any blue medicine! 'What for?' says he. Putty-faced, operatin' heathen!"

He was supposed to take a spoonful of red and a spoonful of white every three hours. Dora dreaded the approach of each medicine time. She had to plead, sulk, and predict disaster before she could get him to swallow the incomplete color scheme, and then for

half an hour he would counteract its good effects by working himself into an adjectival passion at the unfitness of Doctor Rockey and of all doctors.

He muttered the subject in his sleep, and the next morning, his lumbago rather worse, he made another attempt to have a blue medicine prescribed.

"You see your old red and white ain't enough, don't you?" he complained, almost beseechingly for him. "You see it's made me worse, don't you?"

"Look here," said Doctor Rockey, shaking a thick finger at him. "I won't allow you or any one else to tell me I don't know my own business. If you persist in thinking you know more about your case than I do, you *deserve* to be worse. Now you continue your present treatment and keep your mind off foolishness, and by to-morrow morning you'll be better."

"To-morrow morning I'll be dead!" the major hurled back.

"I have no patience with you," said the doctor. "You're a child."

"You're a—you're a——"

The major was still straining for an even mildly adequate designation when Doctor Rockey withdrew, his dignity ruffled, but whole.

Then came hours of despair for Dora. Her grandfather displayed such appalling symptoms the first time she tried to make him take his medicine that that first time was the last. He wouldn't hear of medicine—he wouldn't even see it. Dora had moved the bottles out of his reach; now she was forced to place them out of his sight, for fear he would carry out his threat to rise in all his lumbago and hurl them through the window. In the afternoon, the first chance she got, she ran up to Steinbach's to ask Fred's advice. She hadn't seen him since he had delivered the medicine.

Shortly after she lit the lamp that evening, there came a ring at the bell. Dora flew out and back.



"Give it back! If you didn't p'scribe it, it ain't yours! It's my blue medicine and I want it! Give it back, you—you thief!"

"Oh, grandfather, what do you think?"

The major planted both elbows as if to force himself up.

"You want to know what I *think*?"

"No," said Dora hurriedly. "I mean I want to tell you the grandest news! It's Fred Little with another prescription that's been filled, and what do you think—I mean, it's *blue*!"

As if at a cue, Fred stepped into the room with a wrapped bottle.

The major's eyes were fixed hungrily on the bottle.

"Take the paper off!" he ordered. And then, as Fred began slowly stripping off the rubber band, "*Move*, you young mummy! Are you paralyzed?"

The medicine flew from its wrapper. It was blue, blue as a summer sky, blue as the bluest field in the newest Old Glory.

"Ah-h-h!" breathed the major. "The pop-eyed pulse feeler! He was goin' to do it all the time!"

"I'll put them all together on the chair in a row," fluttered Dora. She glanced at the major. His attention



was riveted on the bottles in her hands. "Fred, won't you—won't you—sit down a while?"

Fred glanced at the major.

"Don't mind 'f I do," he murmured, and sank into the major's easy-chair.

Dora stood the bottles in a trim row on the chair by the cot—red, white, and blue.

"Dora, a spoon," came the order. "I want 'em all together in a big spoon. Mind you pour 'em in their proper order!"

Dora obeyed and handed him the brimming spoonful. Then for the first time he seemed to notice Fred.

"Stand up!" he commanded.

Fred, divining the old man's thought, sprang up and, saluting, held the pose.

"*Long may it wave!*" cried Major Weeden, and downed the mixture.

"I feel better already," he announced, struggling not to make a face.

As if to prove that he was his old self, he fixed a terrible glare on Fred. Dora's heart sank. She knew that look. But just then there came another ring at the bell.

"Another scallywag, maybe!" said the major grimly. "Leave him in, so I can heave 'em both out together."

Dora went to the front door, and in a moment reappeared excitedly.

"It's Doctor Rocky," she said, with a frightened glance at Fred. "Perhaps he wouldn't—perhaps I'd better——" She had picked up the blue bottle.

"Leave that be! Put that back!" cried the major in alarm and wrath.

Dora replaced it just as Doctor Rocky entered.

"I was in the neighborhood," he explained in his ponderous voice.

"Doc, you're welcome any time!" his patient interrupted him cordially. "You're a patriot and a gentleman!"

Doctor Rocky looked down at him suspiciously.

"Gave me blue medicine after all,

didn't you, you old teaser?" chuckled the major.

The doctor looked at the chair and uttered a grunt of surprise.

"Hello, what's that? That's none of my prescribing." He picked up the blue bottle. "What—what——" He mumbled over the neatly penned legend on the label: "'Indigo Vegetable, H<sub>2</sub>O.' What child's play is this?"

Fred squirmed and looked at the door. Dora caught her breath. Her grandfather looked up piteously at the doctor.

"Doctor, d'ye mean it wasn't you sent it after all?"

"Certainly *not!*"

Doctor Rocky clapped the harmless stuff behind his back. At the motion, the major's abject disappointment fled; he was his battling self.

"Give it back! Give it back! If you didn't p'scribe it, it ain't yours! It's my blue medicine and I want it! Give it back, you—you *thief!*"

Doctor Rocky's eyes seemed about to leave his head altogether. He essayed speech, but managed only a gulp. Striding to the table, he planted the bottle down so hard that the major almost stopped breathing for fear he had broken it. Then the doctor found his voice.

"I'm through with you! *Through* with you, do you understand? Forever! You—you insulting old onion! I'll—I'll send you an exorbitant bill, and if you don't pay it within a week, I'll have you dispossessed! I hope you live to be a hundred and your lumbago gets worse every day of it!"

There was a silence, broken only by heavy, retreating steps. The major opened his mouth as if to shout something, but closed it again at sight of the blue medicine, still on the table and at the doctor's mercy. The front door banged.

"I'll—I'll be going," said Fred. In

fact, he was already halfway toward the dining-room door.

"Wait!" commanded Major Weeden. "What'd he say was in that bottle? Never mind. Whatever it is, it's cured me. Why, you pin-feathered shaver! There's more sense in your little finger than there is in that goggly hyena's whole carcass! Dora, bring it over here again and set it down where it belongs, and give me another dose," he ordered.

"But," objected Dora feebly, "it's hardly been——"

"Don't stand cackling like a Rockey! Give me another dose."

"Yes, grandfather," said Dora meekly. And she poured into the table-spoon first a few drops of red, then a

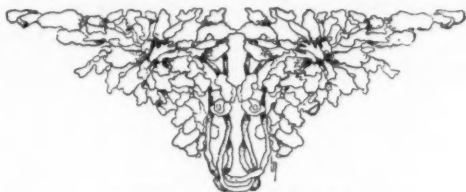
few drops of white, and then blue to overflowing. The major swallowed it, and looked up at them with supreme satisfaction.

"I'm well! Hardly tasted it." He glared fixedly at Fred. "What's that on your lip?" he growled.

Fred fingered it lovingly.

"It's not so much just now, perhaps, sir," he disclaimed modestly, "but in a year—in six months——"

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed the major loudly. "Move those bottles back a little, Dora, and bring the match sticks, and let this young scallywag be the Johnny Rebs, and let me see you show him how we outmaneuvered 'em and outfought 'em and sent 'em skyhootin' across the Potomac at Antietam!"



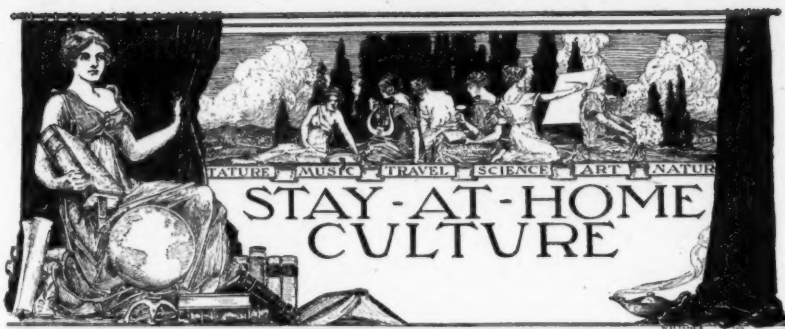
### LIGHT ·O' HAME

THIS country—aye, 'tis broad and free  
And hearts are strong and true;  
But o'er the ocean's sullen waste  
The gowan's bright with dew,  
And past the stretch of breezy moor  
The laverock sings beside our door.

New tasks are here, and glad am I  
To share the toilsome whirl;  
But round the far-off crags and glens  
The mists all silver curl,  
And, lingering long o'er hill and dell,  
Gray twilight weaves its magic spell.

Life called to me in song and dream—  
It lured me far away;  
But over there the heather blooms  
In just the same sweet way.  
Ah, yes, it calls me more than fame—  
The auld, auld path that leads me hame!

GERTRUDE MERCIA WHELOCK.



Conducted by D. E. Wheeler

A richer and fuller life, greater attractiveness and charm, are the gifts that culture brings to a woman. But what chance for self-culture has the home woman of limited means? Must she forego the benefits of travel, of hearing the best music, of seeing the best in art, of knowing the greatest books, and keeping in touch with what the great world is doing and thinking?

We hope this new department will help to solve the problem for many such women.

## Making Your Own Encyclopedia

OUR ancestors delighted in diaries and commonplace books in which were set down ideas, impressions, and facts for future reference and guidance, and often these memoranda proved of great value to the writers, as well as furnishing information and entertainment to other minds.

If you have ever had the opportunity to examine one of these old-time records of a serious and reflective life, you must have been struck by the variety of interests displayed and the painstaking notation of familiar phenomena. Thus, you might find in the fading, yellowed pages such diverse matter as a cure for cancer by means of an infusion of rare herbs; full-moon charms against misfortune; the secret and genuine formula for concocting cherry bounce; how best to break in a refractory horse; the scientific treatment of exhausted soils; how to make a bonnet out of whalebone and bombazine; and a hundred and one other instructions and speculations, to

say nothing of meditations on character and conduct and the proper relations of Man to God and Society.

### THE DIARY HABIT

Thomas Jefferson, in his daily annotations, would enter as unimportant an event as the first bloom of a flower, or he would examine into a style of architecture, or observe meteorological changes, or plan an improvement on the moldboard of the common plow, or discuss a political principle. Franklin was equally minute and versatile.

Southey and Reade, the English authors, made for their use commonplace books of extraordinary scope and dimension. Dickens, too, was tireless in gathering together memoranda of everyday observation upon people and happenings. Those of us who are familiar with the famous diaries of literature—those of Pepys, Evelyn, Amiel, and others of that stamp—know what a storehouse of instruction and pleasure one of them can be.

But this is not a plea for cultivating the diary habit or for beginning an old-fashioned commonplace book, excellent as either would be, and much as we might admire the patience and observation brought into exercise and development thereby. Neither do we project a broadside against the splendid encyclopedias that have been compiled by eminent authorities and that serve every purpose of their own. We could not tell you how to make one "just as good." What we do want to urge is that you put together some sort of encyclopedia of your individual reading and knowledge. How? By reading with an intelligent purpose and clipping or copying judiciously, then classifying and filing your material.

#### A PRACTICAL BEGINNING

For the purpose, obtain a letter-file box or cabinet, which costs little. It will be found to contain an alphabetical index, which will assist you in arranging your matter.

Once started on the scheme, you will be surprised at the interesting and valuable items that will seem to come to you like homing pigeons to their cote. Newspapers of the day, used with discrimination, will offer you a wide variety of topics. Magazines will prove treasure-trove to your sharpened eye. Books that you read will stimulate you to make note or digest of an idea you wish to remember. But be careful not to overburden yourself with excerpts at the beginning of this intellectual adventure. That is a common mistake. Select charily, and do not neglect to winnow out your clippings, retaining only the most authoritative. Of course, experience will teach you values and proportion.

We advise that you try the plan with a few subjects and increase your scope as you become interested and have mastered the mechanics of selection and grouping. Suppose you spend your

first month or two on five or six subjects—say, at random, aeroplanes, architecture, bees, inventions, and transportation. Provided your reading is fairly representative—and by that we mean a newspaper daily and four or five magazines and several books a month—you ought to find yourself with quite a nucleus for your encyclopedia.

#### PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

Let us relate at this juncture how we worked up the subject of musical instruments, just by way of illustrating the possibilities of the trail when one is started. Within three weeks, we had culled two good articles from newspapers, on "Hawaiian Instruments" and on the improvements made in the flute and clarinet by a German musician inventor; from magazines we had taken essays on "Wood-wind Choirs in the Orchestra," "The Early Days of the Pianoforte," and a comprehensive review of a monumental work on the bagpipe. We learned of a man whose hobby was collecting harps of all kinds and wrote him for his beautifully illustrated and descriptive catalogue, which he sent promptly; and we visited an old violin maker, who was pleased to tell us many points about his fascinating craft, which we later wrote out for our archives. In such fashion we grew and multiplied.

Now, perhaps you wonder what use we made of the miscellaneous material gathered on musical instruments? Inasmuch as we were interested in music and its lovers, we had occasion to lend our store of clippings to teachers more than once, and after a period of study, we were guilty of a monograph on the development of the modern orchestra. Then we helped out a distracted sculptor once with a picture of a Roman horn which he had to model in a group. Again, we found the collection invaluable when we were asked to give talks on music before a town club.

## PITFALLS TO AVOID

Should you undertake this experiment of your "very own" encyclopedia, we would like to warn you against piling up newspapers, magazines, pamphlets, with the promise to yourself to do the clipping some time in the future. Make it your first rule to get your material cut and filed at the earliest opportunity. Procrastination in this connection may become your chief foe in compiling such matter. Your data will grow rapidly if you are an earnest seeker.

One man we know who indulged in desultory methods is now literally swamped and helpless under his accumulation of printed matter from which, for years, he has been planning to extract vagrant verse for an anthology. His hoardings have reached several tons in weight, are in storage, and the chances are that his paper pyramid will some day become the funeral pyre of his fond, but foolish hopes. Therefore, we would repeat our warning: Clip and file without delay. And do not be afraid of despoiling your reading matter. So far as our observation goes, newspapers and most magazines are quickly cast aside, or find their way to the fire, the junk man, or some charity organization. Keep your scissors at hand and poised, then, for your legitimate spoil. In this age of speed, knowledge flies by us on a thousand wings, and we must be ready to capture our share. Fifteen minutes a day ought to suffice to keep your clippings up to date.

## "WHAT USE TO ME?"

However engaging and plausible all this scheme may be to our prejudiced imagination, you may remain indifferent and inquire: "Of what use would such an accumulation of stuff be to *me*?" Ah, there is the rub, but we shall try to anticipate several possible occupations into which you may fit, or a state of being that might match yours.

8

First, if you are a clubwoman, little or big, quiet or active, you probably find it incumbent upon you to prepare "papers" of some kind periodically. At once you must be able to appreciate what a source of comfort and inspiration your classified-clipping encyclopedia would prove! It would be indispensable. And your fellow clubwomen would not be slow to realize your advantage, comment upon it, and endeavor to find out your secret. Had you put together a comprehensive assortment of topics, you would also discover a sudden popularity and requests to consult your "perfectly wonderful file."

## THE CLUBWOMAN'S PROBLEM

It is a melancholy truism that the majority of clubwomen, particularly those in the smaller towns, are generally hard pressed for data when they are scheduled to prepare a "paper." The task often strikes terror to their hearts. More than once we have been appealed to in an emergency of this sort, and asked if we could recommend a dependable authority or good sources of information. Even with access to a library, the beset essayist does not know which way to turn for the quickest and best data. And in towns meagerly equipped with public books, the problem is increasingly difficult and worrisome. But with an "encyclopedia" such as we outline here—provided, of course, it has been under compilation for a reasonable time—most of these troubles should vanish—and at the cost of little labor and time to the worker.

## A BOON TO MOTHERS

Second, if you are a mother, and hold that you have no hours for clubs or civic leagues, still a collection of the kind ought to be of much worth to you, especially in regard to your children in their schooling. Doubtless you have been importuned frequently to suggest

a subject for a composition, even to assist the youthful author in choosing phraseology. Most mothers find themselves embarrassed by these overtures. Needless to reiterate our moral—if you have spent spare moments in making a letter-file-box refuge, you rise superior to the situation, and your children regard you with increased admiration. Incidentally, it may be pointed out that one of these letter files will afford an excellent repository for your household recipes.

#### IN BUSINESS

Third, if you happen to be a progressive business man or woman, the scheme holds out many possibilities in connection with your work, whether you are a banker, a doctor, or a shopkeeper, as you will speedily discover should you undertake the task of assembling a private clipping bureau; for the material thoughtfully chosen will suggest unexpected and often surprising applications in advertising, in methods of efficiency, in original departures. Naturally, we can only hint at the possibilities. However, we would like to cite an instance of our own experience.

Once we were acquainted with the proprietor of a coffee-and-tea store in a small town. In a moment of enthusiasm, we proposed to him that he clip and classify all the reading matter he came across pertaining to his business. He laughed at the notion, but we persisted, and eventually he was persuaded. Not a year had passed before he declared that his "coffee-and-tea encyclopedia" had proved itself a great success. He had learned a lot about these popular products, could buy with better discrimination, and had devised interesting and unique store signs which bore witness to his apparently expert knowledge and which attracted visitors and patrons by their novelty and informative value. Furthermore, from something contained in an article he

had clipped, he got the idea of having afternoon "*kaffeeklatches*" once a week, at which he served special brews to customers and talked of the values and virtues of various brands. This is a humble example of how this clipping experiment worked out in a practical fashion, but it is sufficient to prick the imagination toward similar visions.

#### RECOMMENDED TO BOYS AND GIRLS

Fourth, if you are a boy or girl, interested in your studies, or cultivating a hobby worth while outside of them, there is no surer and simpler method that we know of by which you may acquire special knowledge of a subject and increase your mental capacity at the same time. Somehow, an item or article clipped becomes fixed in your mind through the very act of selection. Try it and see for yourself.

As an appropriate and convincing finale to this argument, we will tell you of two of the most noteworthy exemplars of this encyclopedia of individual construction. Both of them are men who hit independently upon the idea years ago. The first man, whom we shall call Mr. A., had as his ruling passion a love for statistics and solid facts. Mr. B., the other fellow, thought it deplorable that so much good matter as is printed in newspapers and periodicals should be looked upon as ephemeral. Of course, he was aware that there were files of magazines and papers in libraries, but he also knew that, for the most part, they were buried, so far as general use was concerned. And he observed that many persons who sought specific information often regretted that they had not kept some issue of a newspaper or magazine containing it. Frequently, too, he remarked that individuals seeking an item or an article were glad to pay liberally for the same. Gradually there grew in the mind of Mr. B. a plan for what he hoped would prove a lucrative business.



## MEN WHO MAKE IT PROFITABLE

Meanwhile, Mr. A. had spent several years in collecting and clipping contemporaneous thought as he had found it expressed in various periodicals and papers, and he broadened his field by corresponding with authorities, institutions, and government bureaus and sought from them their various publications. He employed his leisure in this pursuit of fact and statistic. His filing boxes multiplied until they filled a room and overflowed into another. Some of his friends and neighbors thought he was a harmless lunatic. Others laughed indulgently at his foolish fad.

But Mr. A. cared nothing for their criticism. He had conceived a purpose for his hive of boxes. This he made known to a number of publishing houses and won their attention. Mr. A. outlined to them how well equipped he was to bring their works of reference up to date, and although he was not a literary man, nor could he write well, he was given encyclopedias and histories that were behind the times to edit and refurbish for the market. Being resourceful and executive, Mr. A. hired a staff of trained writers, set them to

work in his clipping hive, and superintended the job. He made good on the proposition, and his income was increased beyond all former earnings.

On the other hand, Mr. B. made an entirely different disposition of his collection of clipped matter. He opened an office where, for given rates, clients might consult his files, which offered a wide range of topics. If the client so desired, a staff worker could be engaged to assist on any research or writing. And the business began to grow. All sorts and conditions of men and women came to this fount of unusual information—writers, orators, actors, artists, clergymen, genealogical sharps, and hosts of others. Mr. B. saw his dream realized. His place fulfilled a real need. To-day he occupies a large suite of offices and gives employment to a number of assistants.

Do you require further encouragement or proof to start you on your "very own" encyclopedia? You must be a deep-dyed skeptic if you do. At least give the idea a trial, even if you try out only one topic. Let us know what you think of the scheme after a few months of work at it.

## FEBRUARY PASSES

IN the snow lands the drifts are just sinking

To claybank and weed;

The ice edges slowly are shrinking

Round bulrush and reed.

For the old tattered nests will be new ones,

Built for wet and for drouth,

And new tenants, wee pilgrims—soft blue ones—

A-wing in the South.

But here baby blooms, shaped like crosses,

(Blue, too, as fair skies)

Push up through the rich, yielding mosses;

White saplings arise,

Thin-stemmed; the first mocker is bubbling;

The dust hints of drouth;

And a moon face the clear pools are doubling.

It's spring in the South!

JEANNIE PENDLETON HALL.

# The Poetry Party

By Mary Patterson

Author of "Another Queer Thing About Parents," "Trouble," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY LAURA E. FOSTER

More pages from Anne's diary.

**FEBRUARY 10th.** More mystery talk at dinner to-night. Mostly about a sentinell. They are calling somebody a sentinell and talking about its devotion. Mother thinks there ought to be some other influence set at work *at once* to divert the sentinell or the person it's scenting. I don't know which. Father thinks it's all nonsense and it's the most amusing thing he's ever seen in his life. He said it would be a rotten shame to check the shevalrick impulse and spoil the dra-matick effect of that sentinell on the wall because all it needs is a sword and a plume to make it a night. Then mother looked the long, long way and she said to *her* it was pro-fetick and almost pathetick (nearly everything they said ended in ick to-night.) Then father said why and she said O it is just e-ter-nal vig-a-lance and there must always be some one watching some place or other and then they talked and talked.

But I did n't pay so much attention to their talk because we had strawberry shortcake for dinner very special, so early in the year. I said couldn't we save some for Sandy and mother said to father You see what have I just said. She must have forgotten what she had just said because she never mentioned the shortcake once and then father said to me there won't be any left unless you save your piece and I said I would. Then mother looked the long, long way again and said to me How would you like to have

a party dear, a Valentine party and ask Sandy to bring some more boys from Newman's and we'll invite Mac Stowe too and Catherine and a lot of the girls. I said I'd like it very much thank you but she hadn't told me about the shortcake for Sandy yet. Then she said it was never as nice when it was left over and we might have some sometime when he came for dinner and then she said to father speaking of devotion and lifted her eyebrows and looked at him. Father laughed. He laughs many, many times when mother doesn't.

Mac Dillon Stowe is the minister's son and father says he is festive, but I have n't looked the word up yet. His sister's name is Catherine and she is in Miss Stratton's school too. She is my age and we like each other. We do French together and once we did a French dialogue. It was a little bit of a play and we did it before callers. It was horrible. The callers, I mean. The French was very good and mother loves to have me use French words in my talk very often just as though they slipped in of their own accord and I knew so much French I simply could n't help it. Catherine Stowe is very good in her French and in everything. They say she has to do an awful lot of Mac's lessons for him so his tutor won't scold him.

P.S. I looked up festive in the dictionary, and I think Mac Dillon Stowe will be very nice for a party.

*February 11th.* Father hopes that mother won't let the party wear her out and he wants her to let Julia bring Cricket in to it. Mother said it could not be done because he'd probably be taking a nap then or getting ready for one and Father said why keep a child forever sleeping specially when it's his first chance to see a lot of the other boys. Then they began to talk. I don't know how it's coming out because they're still talking and I came up stairs. The list for the party is all written and Sandy helped mother with the names because he told her the boys from Newman's to invite. Then mother called up Doctor Newman and he said the boys in Sandy's class were very nice chaps and they just needed a little taming now and then and he was delighted to let them out into smart society once in a while to put on a little polish and then mother and Doctor Newman laughed over the telephone talking back and forth.

Mother thinks it would be *so* interesting to have every one write a valentine at my valentine party and have them too, besides all the other ones we are going to buy. There is going to be a post-box and it would be *so* interesting. Father said it would be hard luck to get all the boys here and then hold them up for some mental stunt. He thinks the girls wouldn't mind it so much but the boys would lothe it. But mother was just thinking and not paying any attention to him and he said why not have the poor kids do them in Latin if you're going in for that kind of reform but mother was thinking yet, and she just said after father talked and talked how do you think we can dispose of that couch by the fireplace. She is going to have every one *write* a valentine.

The ice cream is to be the shape of hearts and the sandwiches and candies and everything heartshaped. There are going to be many, *many* flowers

and they are going to take things out of the parlor and the library and the hall for dancing and the music is going to stay up at the top of the first flight of stairs by the window seat where the stairs turn to go up both sides.

If mother had thought in time she would have written for Beatrice to come, but it is too late and the party was arranged so quickly. But father said write for Beatrice to come at Easter and then give another party. They are so excited about giving parties all at once which is very strange because if it hadn't been for the strawberry shortcake and all the mystery talk about scentinels there never would have been any party of any kind so suddenly.

P.S. I looked up scentinel. It isn't in the dictionary. That's another queer thing about parents. They make up any word they choose right before their children.

*February 12th.* I wrote to Beatrice about the party right away and she wrote to me about it. This is the letter. Dear best friend I think your party is going to be perfectly lovely with all of those boys from Newmans. Be sure and tell me their names and size so if I do come to your house Easter I'll know. If they write valentines in poetry tell me that too. And prose. Some valentines can mean just as much in prose because you can't always rhyme the right things. You can't rhyme Cupid with anything but stupid and that does not fit in with the rest you want to say in the same verse. But you can use poetry words in prose and if you draw some pictures of forgetmenots or arrows around the prose it will do just as well. I would love a poetry party. O I just love poetry. I suppose Sandy will be there and I'm sure I'd like to see what kind of a valentine he'd write. He certainly will have an awful time. There is a new



"It was certainly a perfectly lovely poem and I read it twice."

boy in town and Sammy Stone is going to show him to me I'm certainly thankful for I'm sick and tired of most of the boys and girls I know. They are always alike. The boys have no souls. I hope the new boy will have one and no freckles. I like boys with souls don't you. Mother and father have paid more attention to me lately and I think it's because they're finding out that Thad isn't so much after all but girls are just as much and have their rights and don't bother them at three o'clock in the morning the way Thad did the other night when they couldn't

sleep at all, and no one could find the camomile. So I do not say anything but if my soul is in despair again with their cruel neglect I certainly shall. Wouldn't you. That is Trixy's letter. I wonder how any one knows about a soul and does a boy dance better if he has one. I'll ask Sandy.

*February 13th.* To-morrow's the party and Sandy came in just a minute for a piece of cake and to talk about the party to-morrow, and to give Cricket a marble which Julia got out of his mouth just in time. I asked Sandy about a soul and he said not to bother because once his tipped him off twice and it queered a ny more soul business for him, because it nearly choked him. One time was when I went

home with Marie the day I was common and they thought I was lost, and the other time was when he was on the wall watching for me and I didn't start home until late and he thought I was lost again. Then I forgot what he was saying because while he was saying it, it made me think of something else and I asked him if he was a scentinel and he said now whatever are you drivin at and I told him I heard something once made me think scentinels walked on walls and if he walked on Newman's wall once maybe he was it. He just ate his cake and

said I don't getcha but I'm no scentinel and I told him anyway it wasn't in the dictionary and he said it was too and they could shoot a man on sight if he didn't know the password, and they always had guns. So you see, it wasn't Sandy they were talking about after all because he hasn't a gun but his father is going to bring him one. O hum. There are some things I never can find out about until I learn the mystery talk.

I told Sandy about the poetry for the party. He promised not to tell because it is to be a surprise. Everything is to be surprising. Sandy doesn't like the poetry part *at all*, and he said if he'd known about it sooner there's one fella'd never got a bid and I said why and he said because he was the only fella that could write poetry and he was nutty about it. His name is Gerry.

Mother and father talked about the party last night and to-night and to-day over the telephone. Most of it was about the valentines, the bought ones and the post office. Father has made the postoffice and he is to be the postmaster general. He told mother he could buy several dozens of both kinds of valentines and save her that trouble too and you should have seen the look that swept over my mother's face. She was in perfect despare. She said I really believe you'd go into the tobacco shop and say I'd like that lot you've got hanging in the window and father said O I know where there is a better lot than that it's down at the 5 and 10 bazar there is a fierce lot of screamers there and you can get twice as many for your money. Mother just put down her salad fork and looked and looked at him and said my dear man the way she always says it when she is so sorry for him because he doesn't know nearly as much as she does. She said my dear man it takes just as much discrim-a-nation and art to seelct children's valentines as it does intelli-

gence and taste to buy their books and pictures, and father said O rot get the boys some rattling comicks and the girls some soft ones the softer the better with lace on them. And then they began all over. Mother said the coarse ones were *perfectly* terrible for children's souls just as bad as bad food for their stomachs and father said what tommierot nonsense Nan why the minute Cricket can look at one without eating it I'm going to send him seven in different handwriting, the worst ones I can find and mother was in despare. And father said you might as well make up your mind to it when he's old enough he'll take all the pennies he can find and buy some scrawny wild-looking thing with a vulgar verse to it and send it to *you*, and get some old hobo for *me* and heaven knows what he'll send to the girls and his Proffs. And mother just side and side and then she said without looking out of the finger bowl all the more reason to begin very, *very* early to culti-vate in him a taste for the essthetic and the fine. *Mother* bought the valentines. I went with her but I got tired and sat out in the machine. She took a chair up to a table and had them all spread out and she read every one and then when she showed them to father he said they were refined enough to serve for Easter too and why not keep them over and mother just leaned down and kissed him on the ear, and he jumped and yelled Wow!

*February 15th.* It was perfectly beautiful. The party. Everybody came and some of them came before the time. Some friends of father's and mother's came too but they kept out of the way mostly and so it didn't matter so much. Julia brought Cricket down for a little minute and Sandy gave him a red heart that tasted like cloves and he loved it but made an awful face and got the red stain on his

hand-made dress. Some of the girls wanted to hold him but Sandy wouldn't let them. He said a fellow like Cricket loathed being hauled around by a bunch of women and father rored.

We danced and the music was lovely. O lovely. With little wings all through it. Once I thought the violins said flutter, flutter, flutter—wings for you to fly with, wings for you to dance with, and I suppose when I think about it now that the wings to dance with are fairy wings caught on my silver slipper heels and the wings to fly by are caught in the lace on my shoulders. It really takes both kinds of wings to dance with and when the music is so lovely it trembles with wings flutter, flutter, flutter.

Where was I anyway. O yes about the party. Mac Dillon Stowe and Billy Smith and Andrew Brookes were the other boys beside the Newmans. Then the girls were all from Miss Stratton's and they were all pretty. Father said he never saw such a beauty bunch and Mother said I don't think Agnes Caperton's nose is good and Muriel Master's eyes are too close together and father said for heaven's sake. Nan how can you dissect that way they were the most glorious beautiful bunch and I wish they were all mine every last one of them and mother leaned down and kissed him on the mustache. Mother said Mac Stowe behaved beautifully didn't he and father said yes but he nearly blew up doing it specially during valentine time. Mother said well he took no valentines from *this* house that Doctor Stowe couldn't approve of and then father said no Doctor Stowe would probably use any one of them for a texte when he couldn't find the Bible, and mother put her hand over father's mouth and he rored through her hands.

When every one was writing a valentine Mac said to father I am the original comick valentine but I can't write

one fit for publication and father told mother. Father says he is very fond of Mac and that he's clever and mother says he hasn't settled yet. The girls had an awfully good time writing theirs. *Many* of them wrote theirs to Sandy because his name rhymes with dandy. *Only* because that. They wrote mostly in poetry and there had to be two lines anyway. Catherine Stowe had no trouble at all and Agnes Caperton couldn't think of anything except something about spring and I told her that would do because many things in valentines rhyme with ing. Mother is so sorry she couldn't keep them all or remember them all. Some were left behind but nearly every one carried theirs away. The Newmans mostly wrote the-grass-is-green-the-violets-blue one and changed it around a little. Except Gerry. He went off by himself and stared and stared at the ceiling and Sandy was just walking around looking for another piece of paper. I said I just know Gerry's is going to be a beauty one and Sandy said I'm goin' to punch his face for him in about a minute if he doesn't quit lookin' like a dyin calf. And I said to Sandy O never mind Sandy about getting the poetry you just do something in prose and never mind the picture of forgetmenots either or arrows. And Sandy said who's quittin and I said Trixy said you'd have an awful time and he said she did by gosh and I said O Sandy such language you can't rhyme *any* thing with that and he said I can't? I can't? And I said no you ask Gerry and then he said maybe *he* can't but *I* can—easiest thing in the world—gosh-bosh-slosh-wash—you can't stop me. Why poetry's a cinch, Sandy said. I'll do my valentine in poetry, no two-line stunt, I'll do four lines—I'll write two verses—pooh, poetry's a cinch!

Then he found some more paper and sat right straight down in front of



Gerry and stared and stared at him every time Gerry looked up at the ceiling and I saw father just watch Gerry and Sandy sometimes and twist his mustache. Just one side. The way he does when he's wondering how something's coming out. Well after while Gerry went up to father and Gerry said O Mr. Owen if you don't mind I'd rather deliver this pussionaly to Anne as of course it is addressed to her and father said all right old man if you don't want to trust the postmaster general go ahead. So Gerry came to me and made a bow and said my offering to the lovely Anne and I said O can I read it now (I see I should have said *may* I, but mother didn't hear) and Gerry said wait, wait until you look in your mirror and then see how true I've writ. But I couldn't wait and I opened it right there and this is it.

O lovely Anne! My heart's a-fright  
When to thy beauty I en-dite  
A valentine.  
Thine eyes are stars! Shed kindly light  
On me, who liv'st in starless night  
Till thou art mine.

It was certainly a perfectly lovely poem and I read it twice and then I saw Sandy looking at Gerry and me. He was eating his pencil all up and his hair was mussed and he shook his fist.



"They both said whatever do you want now Anne and I said O just something in the table and they never noticed."

His fist was at Gerry who was looking at me and not at Sandy. Then after we'd read some more valentines and I'd thanked Gerry for his Sandy came up and he said did that boob give you his speel or did he put it in the post office and I told Sandy that Gerry gave it to me and it was perfectly lovely. Then Sandy said with his teeth shut close here's mine. Don't you dare read it till you go to bed just before you say your prayers. Promise. So I promised and put it in the library table drawer so I wouldn't see it and break

my promise. We danced and danced some more and they all stayed until the telephone began to ring and ring for them to come home. Sandy stayed until he saw every Newman out of the house and then he ran and caught up with Gerry and walked so close to him he almost pushed Gerry off the pavement.

*February 16th.* I never can write down all my thoughts about the party. Never. There's so much more than just what we did. But we didn't have much dinner that night and that was late. I was going right to bed but father said O come here Anne and let's talk. So he snuggled me into one end of the big couch and mother was in the other end reading a few of the valentines that were there. Father said Gerry's really showed soul. They found Mac Stowe's and Catherine's too. Catherine's was

A valentine? What shall I say?  
Words fail and I despair.  
But if you'll look into my heart  
You'll find your image there.

And then Mac's was this which sounds the same way with different words.

A valentine? What shall I say?  
I give it up by jinks  
But come into the garden Anne  
And find out what I thinks.

And father rored and mother said well anyway he was diverted from all those terrible, vulgar horrors and just then I found a lot of paper stuffed down between the back of the couch and the loose cushion of the seat. Some were under the cushion. And we found more and more and father began to open them and what do you think? They were comicks. *Very* comick. And father almost woke up Cricket he rored so loud, because Mac Stowe had brought some and Billy Smith some and a lot of the Newmans

had brought a lot and father said of course they were going to, put them in the post office until mother put something over on them. Then mother thought about it and thought about it and father plunked right down beside her at her end of the couch and they were laughing when I came upstairs and mother said well anyway I'm glad I put it over and they had so much to eat they won't mind. And father said no but next year they'll post them before they come and then they laughed some more. Then when I was all undressed and kneeling down to say my prayers I remembered something and I got right up and put on my slippers and my rosy peignoir (French to please mother) and ran back to the library. They both said whatever do you want now Anne and I said O just something in the table and they never noticed. They had even forgotten Cricket. But I ran back upstairs and read Sandy's valentine which I had promised not to read until just before I said my prayers and this is it.

1

- 1 O Anne
- 2 You can
- 3 Have me.
- 4 You see?

2

- 1 Dear Pet
- 2 You bet
- 3 I'll get
- 4 You yet.

That was the valentine. And down at the bottom Sandy wrote this. I am going to punch Gerry's face pray for his sole.

O hum. I hope he won't because Gerry has a nice face and his valentine was lovely. But Sandy's is realer and *perfect* poetry. Father said Gerry's showed soul. But if Gerry's showed soul it couldn't show any more than Sandy's.

P.S. *Simply could n't.*

# The Lady of Rocca Pirenza

By Anne O'Hagan

Author of "By Cool Siloam," "The Awakening of Romola," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY EDMUND FREDERICK

**The final installment of a three-part serial—an absorbing story of character and passion and thrilling incident.**

## WHAT HAS ALREADY HAPPENED.

While engaged in social settlement work in New York, Cordelia Stimson, a young heiress, meets Count Flavian Pirenza, lord of an impoverished estate in Italy, and almost at once the two fall in love. In spite of Cordelia's wealth, there is no question of fortune hunting in the affair, for by the terms of her father's will, Cordelia is to lose all her money in case she marries a foreigner. But the young people are so madly in love that poverty has no terrors for them, and Cordelia has saved up enough out of her income to provide them with a modest capital. Shortly before the wedding, however, Flavian hears that his brother Benedict has embezzled some money, and that the Pirenza name will be dishonored if it is not paid at once. He takes it for granted that Cordelia will consent to his using her savings to settle the matter, and so, indeed, she does, but her New England-bred soul is shocked by his indifference toward his brother's crime save in its effect upon the Pirenza "honor." It is her first intimation of a fundamental difference in their points of view. About this time, an aunt of Cordelia's dies, leaving her and her fiancé a comfortable income. The marriage takes place soon after, and the young couple leave on a honeymoon trip that is to end at Rocca Pirenza, Flavian's ancestral home. Two months of happiness follow, and then, while visiting Flavian's sister, Antoinette, in Florence, Cordelia has her first taste of disillusionment. She learns that Vittoria Cambi, a married woman, has had a serious affair with Flavian. Neither Flavian nor Antoinette can comprehend the shock of this discovery to the sensitive, high-minded girl. Cordelia is still too much in love with her husband to let this episode of his past come between them, but her perfect trust and sympathy are gone forever. While in Florence, Cordelia meets a relative of Antoinette's English husband, Eustis Nesbit, who, while on a visit to Rocca Pirenza, was so shocked by the condition of the peasants that he settled down among them to establish a school. Cordelia is keenly interested and looks forward to helping him. On the way to Rocca Pirenza, the carriage in which Flavian and Cordelia are traveling is held up by bandits. The chief gives an order in a peculiarly deep, musical voice, and Flavian cries out sharply. A flood of Italian follows, and then the bandits withdraw. Flavian is greatly agitated. The next night, while Cordelia's spirits are still depressed by her first sight of the filthy, poverty-stricken little mountain town and the gloom of the great, medieval castle, Flavian's brother Benedict is announced, and at his first word, Cordelia recognizes the voice of the bandit chief. In the terrible scene between Cordelia and Flavian that follows his departure, all the deep, fundamental differences of nature and training that love has glossed over come to the surface, and husband and wife see each other as aliens. Flavian leaves for Naples early the next morning, and when Nesbit calls to take Cordelia to see his school, he finds a woman whose world lies in ruins about her and who turns with a passion of relief to him and all that he represents of familiar Anglo-Saxon civilization.

## CHAPTER XV.

THE snow, already thick upon the mountains beyond the village, was swirling densely through the streets as Cordelia made her way back to the castle from the school. A great, shapeless fur coat wrapped her round,

and her bright hair was hidden beneath a fur hood. Those who were abroad in the streets gave her friendly greeting as she passed; they were friendly folk by nature, and the Lady of Rocca Pirenza had done much to win their loyalty. It was her insistence and her

money that had won for them a common pasturing ground outside the village for the keeping of their flocks; it was her insistence and her money that had insured their care; she had hired the keepers—the goatherds, the cowherds, the pigherds. The people had grumbled at the innovation at first—when do not people grumble at innovations?—but by and by they had perceived an advantage in the removal of their animals from their own living quarters and from the streets of the village.

She had had those streets widened, too, employing many of the men of Rocca Pirenza in the task and seeing to it that they were well paid. A carriage drawn by two horses could make its way through the whole town now, clear up to the castle! She had established some sort of a system of collection for refuse; decayed vegetables no longer offended the nostrils so universally as of old, and their slimy disintegration no longer caused the downfall of the unwary.

Her money—though this, indeed, was the count's initiative—had brought down into the village the magic light that turned night into day, almost as cheaply as the oil of the lamps had performed their smoky task of old. And there was wonderful talk of more magic—of water that should flow in each house at the mere pressure of a finger upon a faucet! The women sighed in luxurious anticipation. No more carrying of great copper urns upon their heads to the village fountain? Oh, joyful miracle!

And yet—where then would one gather with one's neighbors? Where then would one hear the gossip, speculate upon the absences of Count Flavian in Naples, whisper concerning the presence of Count Benedict in the mountains, hazard guesses as to whether it would be boy or girl—that bambino who was coming to make the lady of

Rocca Pirenza truly a woman, truly a wife, truly an Italian, one of themselves? After all, perhaps the fountains and the great copper urns were better than the magic pipes of which the contessa talked! Although, as Donna Cordelia was always telling them—she was so peculiar with her foreign passion for being clean!—it would be much easier to keep the children all clean when the water flowed in each house.

Arrived at the portal, Cordelia was met by the butler. He wore a look of some concern.

"Contessa," he said, "while you were busying yourself at the school, there came riding a messenger from Monte Alevano, with a dispatch from Donna Antoinetta. She comes—the Signora Hardinge—this very evening. What rooms shall be prepared? Never has Donna Antoinetta come here in the winter before. She will be cold."

Cordelia pushed back the gray-squirrel hood from her coppery hair. The snow had made damp ringlets about her broad white forehead. The stinging cold of the mountain storm had whipped a crimson color into her cheeks. She looked regally beautiful, but older, graver, more seasoned, than when she had come six months before to Rocca Pirenza. She considered the question of her sister-in-law's quarters, and gave her commands.

She was puzzled to account for Antoinette's strangely timed descent upon her. Mrs. Hardinge had paid a visit of state, with all her family, in September, and had been much diverted by her sister-in-law's beneficent activities and by Flavian's new zeal for business. But at the close of the visit, she had seemed to shake the dust of the inconvenient old place from her feet rather too joyfully to lead one to expect her to return in December.

"And, contessa, your pardon—one thing more. The Signor Nesbit waits in the morning room."

Cordelia's splendid color deepened. Eustis had not been at the school for several days. And last week he had come back from a three weeks in England. She had been desperately lonely during those three weeks. Flavian was—of course, she told herself!—in Naples. She had been alone with her tribe of dependents. She had looked forward to the return of her coworker with eagerness. But since his return, he had kept himself in retirement, at least as far as she was concerned. What could he want to see her about now? She threw aside her coat and made her way into the morning room.

There was constraint in their greeting—a constraint of his making. There was a few minutes' desultory conversation about the school, about one or two of the pupils, a little laughter on the public sentiment concerning running water. Then he looked at her with a look that arrested her attention, that stopped the flow of commonplaces on her lips.

"I've come to tell you something," he said.

She did not know why, but she was impelled to glance toward his hands. His long, nervous fingers were clenched in his palms. The sight of the gesture stirred her painfully. She felt nervous, apprehensive.

"Yes?" she faltered.

"Yes. It—it—I don't know how to say it. I'm going back to England."

"So soon?" She felt the blood receding from her cheeks, from her lips.

"For good," he answered.

She sat very still for a minute, gazing at him across what seemed to her a wide space filled with a gray mist. But she did not make any reply. She had the sense of being in a nightmare that would pass, or in a fog that would lift. She would wait until the air cleared before she spoke. But now he was speaking again.

"I had to go," he was saying, as if

he besought her forgiveness. "I had to go."

"But—but your work——" she began with a vague movement of her hands toward the town outside the castle walls. "Your school—— Why—I don't understand!" With speech, a realization of desolation began to take possession of her. "Your school—you can't leave it!"

"I must leave it," he repeated insistently. "Don't ask me for any explanation, Donna Cordelia. I—I've known for some time that I must give up the work here. It was that I was arranging about when I went back to England last month."

"Are you going to close the school?" She spoke with an air at once of despair and of challenge. "How can you?"

"But I'm not going to close the school." He smiled a little now. "I couldn't, you know. I'm only the resident director. The school could be closed only by the vote of the board of directors; and I hope, contessa, that you care enough about it never to let the directors vote any such step. As long as the school serves any useful end, I mean."

"What are you going to do?" She was still dazed, and she was not asking questions in the clear and consecutive way in which she wished to ask them. But she wanted to know what he was going to do. "Are you—are you—going to be married?"

"No!"

His answer was explosive, sharp. There was a flush on his worn face. His nails dug more deeply into his palms.

"Then what is it?"

"That I am to do? I—I haven't quite decided. There's plenty of work to be done there. I dare say I shall try something in London—in the East End."

"But what are *we* going to do?" she

burst out in exasperation. "It is—dreadful! It is disloyal! You are the school! No one else counts. How foolish to talk of directors! They would forget it existed but for you! No one else can keep it going. Think of the poor dear Sisters! Imagine them trying even to organize the work, much less to collect the funds! Think of the peasants! Think of me! Those directors that you've gathered together so assiduously in all the big cities in Italy—what are they but a set of names? What do they know of the work? What do they give to the work? Why—it's preposterous, your going!"

"I've got a good fellow to take my place here—at least I think I have him. Godfrey Standish. He was born in Venice. His father was consul. He's lived in Italy a great deal, he loves it, and he's interested in social work. He'll do better than I have ever done. He's more experienced, more broadly so. He's worked in neighborhood guilds in London, and in Manchester he's done wonders. He's married. He—I think he can come. I——"

"Tell me why you are going," she said, brushing aside the account of the man who was to supplant him.

"You will forgive me if I do not tell you," he answered.

"I shall not forgive you for going!" she cried. There was a sharp hurt in her voice. There was almost a passion in it. "I—why, what am I to do here? I—I have no friend. I have nothing here, but my work—my work that you gave me—and—you. How can you? How can you go away?"

"You don't know what you are saying." His ascetic face was gray and worn. "You have—— I shall not point out to you what you have. I shall not talk to you about the love you have, the communion—the hopes——"

During the months since she had known that she was to bear a child, she had schooled herself to calmness, to

health, to high intent. She had busied herself in her work; she had thrown herself whole-heartedly into it, filling her time and her thoughts with it so that there was no leisure, no energy, for repining, for question. She had fought down, sternly, relentlessly, every tendency to "nerves," every impulse to unbridled feeling. But suddenly, at this threat of his to leave her, she relaxed the discipline of all the weeks. The tears she had so often longed to shed rushed to her eyes. The turbulent questions she had longed to fling in the face of the universe came crowding to her lips.

"Why do you pretend to me—lie to me?" she asked him. "You know as well as if I had bared my heart to you how things are with me and my husband! Love and communion and hopes! You know that my child will be theirs—the Pirenzas—not mine! You know that Flavian and I have not been happy together. You know that because I have dared to criticize his people—some of them—he looks upon me almost with hatred, as an alien, an outsider. You know that on the very day we arrived here, I—I made discoveries about his family that I thought gave me the right to—exclude them from our home. But I was soon undeceived.

"We've patched up some sort of peace; we treat each other courteously instead of with that horrible, ugly dislike and antagonism we showed that night. But what is that for a life? What am I doing here, alone—alone? Why do you talk to me about what I have of love, companionship, and hope? Do I have my husband's companionship, his sympathy in any single thing I do? Of course I do not! Even the poor little things I have done here—the silly, futile little things for this village, for the school, for his own people, have been the cause of more coldness between us. He wants me to spend



my money—the little that I have—otherwise—in investments, in a life at Naples—

"Oh, why do I say all these things to you? I don't need to! I don't need to! You know them as well as I do. You know that I have sold my love and my birthright of freedom and of ideals for this—to be the hated alien in his house! I have nothing, nothing at all, but you and my work—the work you gave me! And the resolution not to be beaten to the earth in my spirit! But—if you go, if you go——" She was sobbing now.

"For Heaven's sake, Cordelia—for pity's sake, don't talk to me like this. Don't cry! You break my heart! Oh, child, child, you break my heart! You know why I must go from here. You know—you must know! I can't stay here, seeing you every day, because I love you, I love you! I can't stay!"

His protestation, his avowal, arrested her sobs. She raised her streaming eyes and looked at him. His eyes were dark, intense, with anguish, his face white and drawn.

"You?" she faltered. "You?"

"I, even I," he told her, twisting his mouth into a smile. "Don't look like that, my sweet lady! I should never have said it! But—you—you wrung my heart too much. I—— You'll forgive me now for going?"

She sat quite still for a few minutes, looking at him out of luminous eyes through the faint mist of her tears.

"I shan't forgive myself," she answered, "for having hurt you, for having made your work hard for you. You, who have given your life, your soul—— Ah, I shall never forgive myself!"

"Don't talk nonsense, *donna mia*! Don't you know I should rather have loved you and had to go away from you than not to have known what it was to love you? Think—here I am a man thirty-five years old, and never, since

I was a lad of sixteen, have I even fancied myself in love! Suppose I had gone down to my grave without knowing the exquisite rapture and agony of it? And love of such a woman! Ah, my dear, it has been enough for me. But I'm only human. I can't stay and see you. I can't stay and not be false to—my code. And so—there you are!"

"Indeed I am not there!" cried Cordelia, with a little of her old fire and vivacity. "I am to drive you away, am I? I, who am only an interloper, am to cast you, who belong here, out? Not if I know it, as we say in America! I shall go. I shall do what my husband is always demanding of me. I shall go to Naples. I shall not interfere with your code—for it is my code, too, dear friend! We belong to the dull, responsible races! But you shall go on with your work here. I shall come only when family reasons make it necessary. I shall be loving the little school all the while; I shall help with it—in the vulgar American way, you know—as much as I can. So now you won't go, will you?"

"Donna Cordelia!" Gratitude, adoration, love, and grief were in his voice. "What shall I say to you? I am to drive you away from the one thing that your—your disagreement with the count has left you? How can I do that? Ah, I should not have spoken! I should have kept my tongue between my teeth! But—you'll never know what you have meant to me. Think of it! Try to understand. Don't think me merely weak. Here, for years and years, I struggle with this little undertaking, which is the child of my heart. By work—by such unremitting work!—I see it started. But no one cared except myself. No one. The Pirenza family were half resentful until they saw that their revenues would not suffer for all my efforts to educate their people. Every one else regarded me as an amiable lunatic from the begin-



ning. Still, I forced the thing to prosper—in spite of all the indifference of those who might have helped and all the indifference of those whom the plan was meant to serve. You know what that indifference is—the dumb indifference of sheep!

"Then you came—as radiant as the evening star, as lovely as the daybreak. And you cared, you cared at once! You understood, you gave of your rich sympathy. You looked upon my poor little garden and you looked as if you loved it! You didn't seem to see in me a well-meaning, womanish fool. You acted as if you thought it a man's work in the world to do even such drab things as this. You came and helped me—who had had no help! Do you wonder I adored you? And then to see you unhappy, misprized—do you wonder that I ached to stand between you and unhappiness? And now—you want to

She ran between the up-raised fist and the object upon which it was to descend; she caught its force upon her own slight body.

sacrifice for me something that has helped you to self-mastery, to content! How can I let you do it?"

"You can let me do it far more easily than I can let you throw all your achievement into the dust heap for my sake!" Her face was glorious again. Her eyes were lighted with their most splendid fires of generosity. "If you go, it will only mean that the poor little Nuova Scuola will be entirely abandoned. For I shall do as Flavian wishes—join him in Naples for the winter, go to Rome and Florence for a little while

each season, and spend not more than two months a year here."

He rose slowly to his feet.

"And you forgive me for all that I have dared to say—and to feel?"

"Poppycock!" retorted Cordelia, insistently commonplace to relieve the moment of its strain. "Any woman is proud, even though she may be sad, over a man's real love!"

He kissed her hand. She was strangely thrilled by the little ceremony. She had a rush of desire to put her arms about him, to comfort him for pain and loss. And then she thought of the little school that had been her stay when her world had reeled about her, of the warm-hearted, dark-eyed children who had so easily learned to love her, and she wondered how she could live without its interests, its exactions, without their shy devotion. But the glow of her generosity was greater than the chill of her misgivings. She had been able to do something for her friend! A world in which there was always the bright possibility of sacrifice was not a world to be hated. And perhaps her child would be a girl, whom the Pirenzas would allow her to rear more or less in her own notions. Perhaps they would even allow her some day to take her home, to show her to Cousin Susie and to Louise and to all the girls at the Cape of Good Hope. She quivered through all her body at the thought of home.

But she was going to be very, very lonely without Eustis Nesbit!

The episode, however, had put her in a better frame of mind for the reception of Antoinette. That lady had journeyed into the wilderness to make propositions to her, she was sure. At first she had been inclined to deny her the opportunity. Now she repented. She would listen!

Mrs. Hardinge was frankly in a bad humor. She had suffered almost unbelievable hardships, so she said, in her

journey to Rocca Pirenza, and she was inclined to agree wholly with her brother Flavian that no sane woman would go on living in such a wilderness. Then, having thawed out under the influence of hot tea, of a fire in a great, ugly German stove of white porcelain, and of supplementary fires in American oil heaters, she consented to be a little less cross.

"I'm an ambassador from Flavian, Cordelia, as you naturally know. I love you, of course, but no amount of love would bring me into this trackless wilderness in December unless I were sent on a family mission. Dear girl, why don't you two people settle your differences, so that I can live in peace? Why don't you stop quarreling and begin to love each other properly, as two such beautiful persons ought? You haven't been keeping Flavian at arm's length all this time because of Vittoria Cambi, have you? Because, if you have, you ought to be ashamed of your stupidity. It's exactly the way to drive a man back to an old love——"

"Signora Cambi has nothing whatever to do with it," interposed Cordelia coldly. "Surely Flavian must have told you—since you have evidently talked together——"

"He said some absurd thing about your having thought Benedict concerned in that opéra-bouffe piece of brigandage the night you came over the mountain in June, and about your calling us criminals and all sorts of absurdities. But that was so incredible that I didn't suppose him serious. Or else—I didn't suppose you serious. Of course if a woman wants to keep a husband at arm's length, one pretext will serve as well as another."

"Flavian did not deny to me that Benedict was the chief of that band of brigands."

"Oh, but really now, Cordelia! You did not truly believe such an absurdity?"

"I did, and—forgive me, Toinette, I still do. But—that was only the occasion of our quarrel. The real ground of it is something deeper."

"Deeper!" ejaculated Mrs. Hardinge. But Cordelia noticed that she did not continue her championship of Benedict.

"Yes, deeper. It's that Flavian makes no effort to see my point of view, no effort to realize that I—I am of a different race, a different tradition, even a different class, if you want to put it so. You see, I have been brought up to believe in personal honesty, loyalty, decency, and in personal work. I've been brought up to think that all the world has as great claim upon me as I on it. He believes—so it seems, now that he has come back to his country—only in the family, only in his own family. The world owes it everything; it owes the world nothing—or, at any rate, owes nothing to the people off the world with whom it comes in conflict. He did not seem like that in my country. There he seemed interested in democracy——"

"There," interrupted Mrs. Hardinge pointedly, "he was a young man in love, he was a suitor. Here he is the head of the house, the continuation of his line. And you, my lovely Cordelia, are now also of his house and of his line. You must regard yourself as one of us. It is because he is married, settled, no longer flirting with all sorts of amusing theories, that he has come back to his own point of view."

"You explain it that way," Cordelia struck in, angered by the easy assumption of superior wisdom and reason in her sister-in-law. "I have another explanation of it. In my country we make an effort to teach our savages; the Indians come to our schools, they learn our ways. And then they go back from Carlisle to their tribes. We call what happens to them 'relapsing into barbarism.'"

Antoinette rose to her feet. The

Pirenza look of steely indignation flashed from her dark eyes. She was no longer a woman trying to use the universal language of women to a sister; she was a Pirenza, regardful only of the dignity of her house.

"It will be impossible for me to leave here to-day," she said curtly. "But I shall go at the earliest hour to-morrow morning. I shall report to Flavian the failure of my mission. I shall refrain, if I can, from repeating your insult. \*A certain amount of ill humor and unreasonableness is to be forgiven a woman in your state of health, but you have gone beyond the limits of forgiveness. You—an American"—she laughed contemptuously—"to compare the most cultured, the most artistic, people in Europe, the oldest race in Europe, with the savages whom you have treated so outrageously that you are the horror of civilization!"

Her passion seemed to rise with her words. Her delicate nostrils dilated; her face grew curiously white; her words came faster and faster, ignoring Cordelia's attempted interruptions, attempted apologies.

"Outrageous! Laughable! Well, let me tell you what I had meant to spare you—you have already driven your husband back into the arms of his mistress! Vittoria is a woman of the great race, of the great world, not a crude barbarian, knowing nothing but the manners and customs of the wilds! And she knows how to win a man, how to love a man—unlike you fish-blooded creatures of the other side of the world. You have lost your lover, my friend! Henceforth, you will be only the head of Flavian's house, the bearer of the Pirenza children! You have lost your lover!"

Cordelia had been standing, trying to stay the tide of the angry woman's speech. At Antoinette's last words, she swayed slightly and caught at the edge of a table for support. Her face was

white with the whiteness of alabaster behind which a light burns.

"You do not astonish me," she answered very quietly. "You do not astonish me. I think I have been prepared to hear this ever since I came to this country."

"Cordelia! Cordelia!" Antoinette was frightened at what she had done. Her swift gust of fury was over. She came forward, arms outstretched. "Cordelia, Cordelia, forgive me! I hadn't meant to say it. It's not true—or, at any rate, it's only a little true! It's you he loves, you he adores. But you keep him away, you refuse to surrender your will to his. She is a cat of a woman, all insinuation and grace. She winds her way into his empty heart. She feeds his starvation with flattery and passion. But it is you he wants, you whom he is miserable about."

Cordelia still stood, staring, thinking how little she understood them all, with their variable moods, their queer substitutes for conscience, for law. But her bewildered cogitation ended suddenly.

There was the sound of footsteps running along the stone corridors; there were cries and lamentations. Cordelia raised her hand to stay her sister-in-law's tempestuous speech of remorse, and Antoinette stood silent, listening. The door burst open without preface. Little Mr. Neri hurried in, blanched gray. Behind him streamed the motley array of the household servants, calling, crying, sobbing, imploring the saints. In the factor's hand was a slip of paper which rattled like a dry leaf in his shaking grasp as he hurried forward.

"Donna Cordelia! Contessa! Donna Toinetta— Oh, the day! Oh, my ladies—"

"Stop your outcry, Neri," said Antoinette sharply, "and tell us what is the matter. Don't you know better than to alarm your mistress?"

"My lady's forgiveness!" murmured Neri, with a dazed glance toward Cordelia. "But——"

He held out the fluttering paper, and Antoinette seized it, as Cordelia made no motion toward it. She read, her face growing ashen.

"What have you done? Have you sent men, horses, a doctor? No? You fools, you worse than fools!"

"What is it, Antoinette?"

Cordelia spoke at last, draggingly. In the rear of the room the old nurse was crying out:

"My boy, my boy! The baby I nursed at my breast!"

Mrs. Hardinge passed the slip of paper to Cordelia. It was a coarse sheet, and there were rudely drawn symbols upon it—a great bowlder with two cedars beside it, and, outlined below, the body of a man, a stiletto thrust into his chest. Below that again was painstakingly printed, in a hand that looked like a child's conscientious, unskilled efforts at lettering:

The fine Count Benedict has gone once more to meet Eleanora Feretti by the short way. Get his carcass before the hungry wolves of the mountains get it.

The signature was in sign language also—a small, round fruit, a berry or cherry, dangling from its stem.

"It is not true, of course, dearest," said Antoinette soothingly to Cordelia, suddenly concerned with the effect of all this excitement upon her sister-in-law. Antoinette had the Italian woman's candidly overwhelming regard for the state of motherhood and all that pertained to it.

She turned and spoke rapidly, imperiously, to the crowd in the room. How had the message come?

Mr. Neri had no knowledge whatever; he had found it lying upon his desk in his office fifteen minutes ago, when he had returned from half an hour's consultation with a man from Monte Alevano who wanted to buy

some of the Count Flavian's sheep. Yes, yes, he added to Antoinette's furious interruption, he knew that the note could not have been placed there without human agency, but no one in the household admitted having seen any stranger enter the office. No one! And there were no strangers in the village.

"This Eleanora Feretti"—it was Cordelia who spoke; she dragged her voice up from a great depth—"this Eleanora Feretti—she is dead, then?"

They crossed themselves as they told her how Eleanora Feretti, more than a year ago, had come to grief, and how—with prayers for her excellency's forgiveness—she had had the effrontery to let it be known that Count Benedict was the cause of her shame. And she had been sent away from her aunt's — She had lived with her aunt, for her own people were in America, if her excellency pleased—

"Yes, yes," murmured Cordelia.

Yes, and she had been sent to another aunt, farther in the mountains—oh, much farther, much wilder! And there, when her ordeal was at hand, she had committed the unpardonable sin—she had walked off a cliff into the presence of the Holy Virgin and the saints of heaven! She had killed herself, as the contessa would kindly understand. At first they had thought her merely disappeared, her aunt and the village; or run away, perhaps, to join her own father and mother in America. But not so. At the bottom of the great ravine they had found her lying, in the spring when the ice and snow had melted. A great cascade of yellow Genista had grown downward, clothing her poor body with glory; and there were some—unbelievers, undoubtedly—who had taken that for a sign that God had forgiven her, or would forgive her, that she had cast away His gift of life. But the priest had taught them better. And now—and now—

"And now see to it that you send

swiftly to the Rock of the Twin Cedars!" interrupted Antoinette; and Cordelia gave the necessary orders, and bade them also dispatch a messenger to the nearest point at which a telegram could be sent to Naples.

The two women sat for hours, waiting, waiting. Antoinette talked endlessly, now in fury against the girl who had been the cause of Benedict's death, now in impatient accusation of Benedict—Benedict, who always went too far, Benedict who was a selfish beast! Little tales of the family life when they had all been children kept coming to the surface. Sometimes she wept, and sometimes she was stony, and sometimes exceeding wroth against the dead man for old troubles.

But Cordelia sat through all the lamentation and the accusation dry-eyed, colorless, dazed. She was again in the bleakly neat Feretti tenement, darkened for shame, and she was looking at the drowsy head of the little Maria, bent over the table. She was walking the crowded, dusky street again in the twilight—free, free with the great freedom of untouched youth that has not yet found itself in the coils of its own passions and those of the lives that are to be woven with its own. She was standing at the precinct station desk, promising mercy to a mean young pick-pocket. And Flavian Pirenza, debonair, kindly, frank, impulsive, was gazing for the first time into her eyes, with that look as if she were a wayside Madonna of his own land stepped out of her niche for the succor of some breaker of stone upon the road.

It was night when they brought Benedict's body home from the Rock of the Twin Cedars. They had taken the dagger from his heart—there was nothing about it to identify it; hundreds such were in the mountains—and they laid before Antoinette the piece of paper that had been fastened to his body by the slim blade. It bore the words:



"This for Eleanora." And below again was the little round fruit for signature.

By the time Flavian came, awe and pity had awakened in Cordelia again all her native kindness. She greeted him with tenderness, with sympathy, with a sort of love, indeed. And he took her greeting gratefully, resting his head against her shoulder, hiding his grief-scarred face against her breast, entreating the cool balm of her affection upon the heat of his hurt family pride, his wounded, invincible brotherly affection.

The days until the funeral was over passed for them both in a kindly mist of mutual toleration, remorse, and pity.

That night they sat together, Cordelia and the brother and sister. Lionel Hardinge had hurried back to Florence as soon as the ceremony was over. The children needed a parent, he had said, and Antoinette's place was at Rocca Pirenza until all the last duties had been fulfilled; but Cordelia thought that the mountains in December, combined with the gloom of the melodramatic, sordid tragedy, had been more than the amiable, easy-going Englishman could stand.

"Have you taken any steps yet, Flavian," asked Cordelia, shivering a little, "to discover the—assassin? Have you engaged detectives?"

"Detectives?" Flavian laughed shortly and gave a sort of shrug. "I need no detectives."

"Then you—you——"

She wanted to ask him if he thought that, after all, justice had been satisfied when Benedict came to his death, that the scales swung even now, and that the toll of crime had been fully taken. That had been her own feeling, but she had feared—she had expected—that no time would be wasted, no money spared, in the effort to run to earth the killer of Count Benedict Pirenza, richly as that young nobleman had deserved death. It had seemed

almost too much to hope that her husband also would see the matter in such a light! She hesitated, fearing to wound by the wrong word, fearing, too, to dissipate that pitiful truce of the emotions in which they had all been living, she and Flavian and Antoinette.

"Then I what?" said Flavian with sudden coldness, sudden suspicion.

It was as if he had read her mind, and, reading it, had armored himself against her.

"You have your own suspicions?" she ended weakly.

She could not, she simply could not, raise any issue with him. She could not yet, until she felt a little return of her old glow and vigor, engage in battle for any cause, no matter how sacred. After all, she supposed that the murderer should be handed over to the law.

"Suspicions? But, my dear girl, the murderer left his autograph as plain to read as if he had spelled it out. He gloried in his deed! He would regret not to have full credit for it! He shall have it!" His jaw set grimly.

"His autograph? Oh, you mean the little berry?"

"I mean the cherry that he so kindly appended to both his pieces of paper. The man was, of course, *Ciro Palisi*, reputed to be betrothed to the girl when he went to America. *Ciro*, a cherry—surely you have not forgotten that?"

"Oh!" cried Cordelia, suddenly weak.

She remembered the *Ciro Palisi* who had been ready, almost, to send home for his bride. She remembered the boys of the Cavour Club at the James Winant House. She remembered *Ciro's* flashing eyes and teeth and the kind, frank look of his face; a friendly boy, an honest boy, an industrious boy—every one had spoken well of him. He could not be a midnight assassin!

"Oh?"

Her husband, who was suspicious of all her thoughts, repeated the excla-

mation, and looked at her darkly. Was the alien on his hearth daring more criticism, more questioning? His obvious truculence made her tremble. She wanted peace. Yet—Ciro—

"But, Flavian," she faltered, "suppose it were not *Ciro*. Why, I knew *Ciro*! The nicest boy—he couldn't have done such a thing! And besides, suppose that some one else who had cause to hate your brother—there were many, it seems—and who knew about *Eleanora* and *Ciro*, killed him? Don't you see how natural it would be for that person to use *Ciro's* mark? Oh, I can't believe it was *Ciro*!"

"It's easier for you to believe ill of your own family than of the beggars you sentimentalized about in New York, is it?" flashed Flavian. "You never had difficulty in believing evil of *Benedict*, and you are wonderfully able to think harsh thoughts of me. But *Ciro*—no, no, no! That would be too much!"

"I only suggested—" murmured Cordelia.

"Well, your suggestion is absurd. *Ciro Palisi* landed in Naples two weeks ago. He was seen, recognized, and talked to on the day he landed. He inquired for *Benedict's* whereabouts among some *Rocca Pirenza* boys. He made not the slightest disclaimer of his identity, and he disappeared at once. Later, he was seen at *Monte Alevano* by men who knew him. They knew, too, what had brought him home—to kill a faithless sweetheart or to kill his supplanter. What else should bring a man home—a man of his sort—from money getting? They knew! He made no denial. *Benedict—Benedict* was reckless. He was always reckless." Flavian's voice softened to tenderness. "He despised fear; he loved danger. He was warned of *Ciro Palisi's* presence in the neighborhood. He scorned to take a precaution. *Ciro Palisi* has gone back to New York. He sailed

on the steerage of the *König Albert* the day after *Benedict's* body was found. That is known."

"Are you going to have him arrested when he lands?" said Cordelia faintly.

"Arrested? Not at all. Why should I bother your good officials to do what can be perfectly well done without their intervention?" He laughed.

"You mean?" breathed Cordelia, leaning forward to look more closely at him, to hear his words more plainly.

"I mean that, instead of having him arrested, I shall have him first ruined and then killed," said her husband quietly, almost conversationally.

"No, no, no!" cried Cordelia.

"Flavian, you are a fool to excite her when she is so soon to come to her hour!" cried *Antoinette*, with impatient forgetfulness of her own part in exciting Cordelia.

"She had better know the truth, whatever her condition," responded Flavian determinedly. "Her whole life with me has been one of hostility to everything connected with my family, my nation, my standards, my ideals. I am weary of the wordy duels. She might as well learn, sharply and for all time, that I am a *Pirenza* and avenge the wrongs of my house, that I am an Italian and avenge them in the Italian fashion. The man of my own class who wounds my honor, I challenge. The canaille—" He shrugged. Then he faced her harshly. "You may as well realize, once for all, that I am not a damned, money-grubbing American. I am not ruled by women; I am not ruled by fear; I am not ruled by my pocketbook! I do things as I will—you understand?"

The flush of anger did not dye her face. The sardonic smile with which she had learned to greet his accusations of American money worship did not distort her lips. She went toward him wildly, with hands stretched out in entreaty; she sank at his knees.

"You shall not! You shall not!" she cried passionately. "You shall not make my child a murderer's child! See, see, Flavian! On my knees I beg it! On my knees! Oh, I have given up so much for you, for love of you. I have given up my home and my people and the work that was dear to me. Yes, and money, too! I gave up money, that you say we all love so much—we Americans—to marry you and to come away from my own land to be your wife.

"I'm sorry I have tried you. I'm sorry I have criticized the things I didn't like, the things I didn't understand. I'm sorry, sorry! I will not criticize again—anything! Not the dirt; not the poor, overburdened old women bearing loads the donkeys could not carry or the women breaking rocks on the roadside; not the children with no schools. I will never criticize again, never, never! And I'll make the ideals of your family mine. Only you must do this one thing for me—this one thing! You must not make my child's father a murderer! Oh, Flavian, Flavian! You must do it for yourself, too! You must not be a murderer! Your hands must never be red with blood! For I love you—you, too, as well as our little child that is coming to us. You will not kill him—you will not kill Ciro?"

"You foolish girl!" cried Antoinette, whose arms were about the distraught woman and who was trying desperately to soothe her. "He isn't going to kill



He looked at her, started to speak, thought better of it, and, kissing her hand, went away.

any one! You—— For the love of Mary, Flavian, tell her that! Tell her anything she wants you to tell her! It is dangerous to try her like this! Tell her! Promise her!"

But some devil of obstinacy was alive in him that night—some twisted sense of loyalty to the brilliant, captivating, lawless brother who had been the bane of his maturer years, some smoldering anger against the woman who had from the first regarded Benedict as an outsider, some pangs of conscience, some perversity of passion. They wrought together in him to make him cruel.

"This scene is ridiculous!" he said. "Cordelia, you're talking hysterically and theatrically. Antoinette, you, eternally harping upon the maternal as you do, you're almost as bad. I shall cer-

tainly not stain my hands with the blood of the scoundrel who killed my brother, but I shall certainly see to it that he dies, and that he has full opportunity to know why he dies! Now let's have an end of this tiresome scene."

"Flavian, you're a brute, but you're even more of a fool!" snapped Antoinette.

She stood erect again, for Cordelia, rising from her knees, threw off the encircling arms and faced her husband steadily.

"If you do that vile, inhuman thing," she said, "you and I will be strangers forevermore—do you hear? Never another child will I bear you—murderer! And if God is good to me, the one that lives against my heart now will die, die, before his eyes have opened to the world! And that shall be the end of your terrible race of Pirenzas! It shall die; its name shall be forgotten! I swear it!"

"There are other women in the world," he told her with a cold fury, "and if you refuse to do your duty and to perpetuate my house, understand this—our marriage shall be annulled."

She stood looking at him with a contempt and hatred unmasked even by the delirious light in her eyes.

"Yes," she said slowly, mellifluously, uttering each word with a delicate, biting precision, "yes, I dare say you could buy an annulment and buy a woman to carry on your name—now! We—my family—have endowed you so that your case is not quite hopeless here at home, where even a little money counts for much!"

She finished with a laugh. It seemed to her that she was listening quite attentively to some one mouthing a part in a foolish play behind a row of dazzling footlights, which were not properly masked from the audience. Across the row of lights she saw now another figure advance—a man, whose face was

distorted, whose arm was upraised to strike, and who uttered a terrible oath as he came. And there was a third figure—a slim little woman in black, in that blackest of all blacks, the black of the Italian mourning garb. She ran between the upraised fist and the object upon which it was to descend; she caught its force upon her own slight body. And the fury-distorted face of the man grew pale with alarm, and his voice came from far back beyond the blinding line of footlights, and he was saying, "Why, 'Toinette! Why, 'Toinette!" and—— Could it be that she, Cordelia, had caught the force of that intercepted blow, after all? For she was sinking, sinking, sinking—— The lights were going out; there were confused cries about her.

Then her brain cleared. This was the great library of the cardinal's suite, and her sister-in-law, that strangely compounded little creature, had taken a blow that Flavian Pirenza had meant for her—for Cordelia, his wife. And pain and faintness racked her; and she had dared defy God and pray for a stillborn child!

"Cordelia, Cordelia, my dear one!" It was 'Toinette's voice—dear, funny, unexpected "Toinette! And then: "Madelina, Madelina! Swiftly, swiftly! Send for——"

That night Cordelia's son was born, a month before his time. For weeks they thought, those who stood about the great, canopied bed, that the child could not live or the mother recover from the fever in which she lay, alternately stupid and delirious.

But one morning she opened eyes of reason, and smiled faintly, but kindly on those who were in her room. And they put the baby in her arms and saved for another day the information that the little lad would always go lame through the world.

## CHAPTER XVI.

Cordelia leaned back in her lounge chair, drawn close to the stone-wrought balustrade of her terrace, and sighed a sigh of relaxation. Below, in the restored garden, she saw her little son walking by the side of Father Anselm, whose fat old face, a winning combination of simplicity, shrewdness, and kindness, was wrinkled with smiles as he listened to the boy's babyish prattle. The child, though he was only "half past" three, as he himself put it, had a great amount of conversation, for the most part quaintly elderly. He had no childish companions except the plentiful crop of the cook's grandchildren, who swarmed in the kitchen regions; thither, to be sure, Madelina often took him.

When Cordelia looked down upon him from the terrace's slight elevation, she did not notice the limping tread that was the mark he carried of the terrors of the night that had brought him into the world. The poor, unequal little legs, one of them lengthened by a clumsy, wide-soled shoe and braced in iron, were inconspicuous in the flowering paths. She saw only the eager little face, the thick riot of dark curls, the flutter of the white kilt and blouse; she heard the fluting treble of his voice. Her eyes grew misty with ineffable love, and a smile of the rarest tenderness softened the settled gravity of her face.

"My darling!" she murmured, half aloud, half to herself.

Madelina appeared before her, an Abigail whose countenance wore a look of everlasting protest against the insufferable conditions of her life. She was in the habit of saying at times to her fellow servants—about once a day, to be exact:

"Figure to yourself the grotesqueness of the situation! Here am I—I—who have served great ladies in Paris,

on the Riviera, in Florence when it is gayest, in Petersburg, than which there is no place more gay! Figure it to yourself—I take service with an American lady, bride of our old nobility, than whom who could be more likely to be gay? I foresee a life all crowded with dresses, jewels, with attiring my lady for balls and fêtes innumerable. And what is it that befalls me? I come to a barbarous mountain with my mistress and there we stay—picture it to yourself!—there we stay for almost four years! She wears no jewels, she wears no dresses—none worthy the name! She attires herself for no balls, no fêtes. There are no balls or fêtes for her, except the school children's dance or the Christmas pantomime that the mad Englishman made before he went away!

"If it were not for the little Count Mimi, there would be nothing at all for me to do. One cannot make it a life work to brush the Donna Cordelia's hair twice each day until it shines like the gold in the mosaics at Venice! Picture it to yourselves! I, an artist, I live month by month, year by year, losing my art, playing nursemaid to a little boy! Ah, but to a little angel! Well, for Donna Cordelia and for my little Count Mimi, I would sacrifice my art forever. But it will not be forever. She will not always live like a grieving widow! She will emerge; she will reconcile herself with my master, the count; and then I shall come to my own again. My master, the count, will emerge from his delusions, and all shall be again as on their honeymoon, when they drowned themselves in each other's eyes."

The servants' hall paid but scant attention to Madelina's frequent settings forth of her sad lot. No one paid a great deal of attention to the peculiarities of the contessa's situation. They had grown familiar with them, and the familiar lacks peculiarities. That she went to Naples almost never, and al-

ways upon errands connected with the estates or the school, that Count Flavian made but the briefest and most infrequent visits to Rocca Pirenza—these were matters for the great ones to settle themselves! The great were strange.

One thing was certain—the contessa had brought good times, or something approximating good times, to the town. Their streets, how wide and clean they were! No pigs or goats or cows defiled them, as was the case with that beast of a village, Caveano! The boys of Rocca Pirenza, how they were learning other trades than brigandage! The hospital, what pleasure to be sick there, in the bright rooms with the rows of shining white beds, and the kind sisters and the white screens! The children, how many and wonderful the things they learned in the school that the mad Englishman had established!

It was a strange working of the laws of an inscrutable Providence that the contessa had not been rewarded for all her charities by a perfect child! But Providence, like the great ones, had its own rules of reward and punishment! It was less fatiguing to the brain not to try to follow its workings. And as for the child, there would be others of perfect legs, once the count and the countess came to reason!

Cordelia had had a busy morning. She had taught in the school; she had consulted with the syndic—simple-hearted dispenser of justice in the village—concerning the disposal of the case against a thieving goatherd; she had visited the little hospital; she had ridden on horseback down to her husband's olive groves and vineyards on the lower slopes, and had inspected their condition; she had gone through her own storerooms, and had made out a list of goods to be sent up from Naples. The servants and employees had at last grown used to her careful oversight. They had accepted it and even agreed among themselves that

since she put back into improvements for the village all that she saved by her distasteful, businesslike habits, it could not be pure parsimony that dictated them.

"Yes, Madelina?" she spoke inquiringly.

"The bambino, signora—is it that I shall take him from the padre and put him down for his nap? Or is it still lessons that they do?"

"Lessons are over for the day, I think, Madelina. You may put the baby to bed. I'll come to the nursery when you have him ready."

"*Si, si, signora*," said Madelina, and went down the steps into the garden.

Cordelia's eyes followed lovingly. She caught the twinkling expression on Father Anselm's round face, the protest on Mimi's at the command to the nursery for a nap. She even caught his babyish protest—he was a man child, who must not cry when he hurt himself; therefore he was a man child who should not be put to bed in the middle of the morning! Madelina hushed his dignified protest by catching him up in her strong arms and kissing the words to silence. Mimi struggled violently—a young windmill of white-stockinged legs and white-sleeved arms—against the indignity. But he was borne off.

Cordelia's tender smile shone over the little scene like a light. She never saw her little son without recalling in the subconscious depths of her the impious wish of that mad night before he had been born—the wish that he might die before he saw the light. With every look of her eyes, with every note of her voice, there went up to Heaven a prayer for forgiveness for that crime, even though she had been mad when that unholy wish had been uttered.

Father Anselm—Flavian had decreed that his son should have a priestly tutor even from the day he could lisp—bade the contessa farewell and trotted out of the garden by the castle entrance



below the terraced piazza. Cordelia turned to the mail bag, not yet opened for the day. She unlocked it and dumped the pile of papers and letters upon the table. Ah, there was a letter in Louise's good, clear, forceful handwriting! She was glad to see it. Seldom as she had written to the James Winant House since she had accepted the hard conditions of her marriage, her heart was always stirred by the thought of it and its inmates. But—here was another envelope, also in Louise's handwriting—a thick, heavy, officio-social-looking affair. She tore it open first, strangely excited.

In one glance her eyes took the message—Louise had married the Babbitt Fund at last! No, not the fund, of course—the donor of the fund, the man up in British Columbia! And behold—she tore at the letter—Louise had written, briefly, nonchalantly, on the very morning of her wedding day, to say that after the ceremony, she and her husband would sail for Naples. Of course they would come to Rocca Pirenza—if asked, she added jocularly, as though there could be no question as to the invitation.

Cordelia laid the funny, brusque, happy little letter down; her wrists were suddenly weak. Why did she feel an unconquerable aversion to seeing Louise—or, rather, to having Louise see her? Louise, who had been so doubtful of the success of her marriage, Louise the true prophet of ill!

There was a note from Flavian from a Swiss resort. He also was coming to Rocca Pirenza. She put it aside with a weary sigh. If Flavian was at a mountain lake, doubtless Vittoria Cambi was there, too! And if Flavian was about to come home, it was doubtless that he might arrange to squeeze a trifle more in rents out of his people. If she were a psychologist, perhaps the study of the relapse of Flavian into his racial type would be interesting to her.

But she was no psychologist! She was the woman who had married him in an iridescent dream of love and joy; she was the woman who had awakened swiftly and hopelessly from that dream; but she was the mother of his son, of the boy from whom nothing, she swore, should ever separate her—no craving of her own for fullness of life, for happiness—and she was the lady of Rocca Pirenza, whose task it was to undo, so far as her little effort and her little income could accomplish it, the wrongs her husband constantly put upon the community that should have been his ward.

She looked through the motley assortment of other letters—bills, advertisements, a wedding announcement or two, a funeral card or two, a charming young letter from Toinette's eldest girl, who had "come out" in England that summer and who wrote to tell her aunt-in-law how thrilling it was to bow before a king and queen in Buckingham Palace. And finally she opened slowly the letter she had kept to the end—Eustis Nesbit's. On those rare occasions when his handwriting showed among the contents of the letter bag, she always saved it for the last.

She had never learned what version he had heard of the events of the night of Mimi's birth. Some story of the stormy scene had, of course, circulated through the village—trust the servants for that! He had come once to see her when she had been convalescing from the illness that had accompanied the boy's birth. Toinette, who had stayed by her all through that long, desolately drifting period—Toinette, whose sympathy with motherhood had stifled all the resentments of a Pirenza—had played propriety. She had not left them alone for a single second. Afterward she had told Cordelia that it was never safe to leave a beautiful and injured young wife alone with the man who adored her. She had read

the situation quite correctly, so far as Eustis' feelings were concerned; she had seen it all in one keen glance; she had twice Cordelia's quickness in scenting an emotional situation.

Cordelia had been too weak to resent particularly the obtrusive, tyrannous chaperonage. It had been kindly meant at any rate! But it had prevented her from learning at firsthand what Eustis' letter, delivered the next day, had told her—that he was, after all, going home to England; that he had learned enough of her condition to know that it was for him to go and not for her. Rocca Pirenza was hers—his gift to her, if she would let him put it so. And he, too, was hers, if ever she had need of him. Would she remember that? Would she remember that there was no service in the world he would not do for her?

She had remembered it every day since. The memory had warmed the heart that Flavian's infidelity had chilled.

His gift to her—since he chose to put it that way—his gift of his work, his gift of a refuge from an existence in Naples to be lived on her husband's terms, had saved her life, she believed, had saved her reason and her self-respect. She could not have stayed at Rocca Pirenza if Eustis had stayed there—she knew that now. In her misery and disillusionment, she would inevitably have turned to his understanding; in her loneliness, she would have sought his companionship; in her youth and her youth's desire for love, to what passion in him would she not have appealed? No, he had been generous and high-minded and wise! He had gone away and had left her with work to do.

It was a great gift! He had saved the mother of Mimi from scandal; he had left no weapon for Flavian to shake over her defenseless head. And he had saved her from the inevitable traitor in her own breast.

She took up the letter now. Her heart was tender toward him. He wrote to her but seldom. She always had a curious thrill at the sight of one of the letters from the East End of London where he had been at work since he had left Italy.

To-day's missive was very brief:

I am coming to Italy—to Rocca Pirenza—to the *scuola* and to you, to say perhaps "good-by," perhaps only "*a rivederci*." You will have seen by the papers what the state of Europe is. I myself believe that war is inevitable. Serbia cannot accept Austria's ultimatum; and if Austria and Germany unite against the little country, there is no question in my mind that England's treaty obligations will carry her into the conflict. I shall go into a training camp. There is one down near my brother's place in Hants. But first I want to see you. E. N.

The letter dropped from her hand. War? Serbia? Austria? But this was absurd, unthinkable! War? What wild imagining was this of Eustis Nesbit's? She tore open the bundles of papers. She scolded herself because she had taken no interest in the news that they had been printing. She had read them scarcely more than the peasant women of Rocca Pirenza, who knew not how to read at all. Her life had been so busy, so busy and so narrow; it had been absurd of her not to read the papers! Not that, of course, there was anything real, anything substantial, in this crazy idea of Eustis'. Even if the papers seemed to make much of it—and they did, they did! See their mad headlines! But even so, papers always grew excited about the possibility of war. They were forever discovering war clouds in the Balkans. Well, of course, the Balkans did go to war now and then. But not the great nations, not the really civilized nations, not the grown-up peoples of the world! Thus her fears clamored within her. Why, they could not afford it! War? She essayed to laugh at so grotesque an idea.

The next day Eustis was with her. He had written upon the eve of his crossing, and he had not delayed to reach Rocca Pirenza. He looked older—and younger. There was a little gray in his hair, but there was a look of exaltation on his face that took years from it. She saw the look with resentment. She read it for what it was—man's excitement in the face of danger, man's primitive joy in the summons to a primitive task.

"I had to come," he said. "I had to see you and your boy—and all the dear children of the mountains. I've been there already, at the school. How they love you! I was right—the work went on, didn't it? I wasn't needed."

"I don't want to talk about them," said Cordelia, a little imperiously. "I want to talk about you. Why do you look like that? Why is your face shining?"

"Why should it not be shining," he answered her quietly, "when I am looking at the dear lady of my love?" She blushed. "I may say that to you to-day, I think," he added, "because, you see, perhaps—there will be no more days to say it."

"Is that a reason why you should be happy?"

He looked at her long and earnestly. Something akin to a grim humor played about his mouth for a moment. Then he sighed and laughed, and finally he spoke.

"My dear *contessa*," he began, with an air of exaggerated deference, "let me make the case plain to you. I told you once that I loved you—worshiped you, that you had made my life over. It didn't seem necessary or desirable to point out to you that I also hungered and thirsted after you. Did you think my love was all worship? Did you think that I thought of you altogether as the Madonna behind the high altar? Dear Cordelia! I have wanted you for my wife, for my companion. I've never

gone into my study, back there in gray, foggy London, and lit my lamp in the evening, without wanting you to sit opposite me—without seeing you there!

"Don't interrupt me, please"—for she had opened her lips to speak. "I never asked you whether you could have loved me or not. When I was here with you—that little season—you were a bride, wrapped about in the inviolate glory of your new love. But when I got away from this place, which is another man's, when I got away from the scene dominated by his towers—I stopped seeing you as his bride. I began to see you as mine—in the setting I could provide!

"Wait!" for again she had essayed to speak. "Mind you, I'm still not asking you if—if—ever—anything—in you—might have answered me. I'm only trying to tell you that I'm humanly in love with you, and that since I can't humanly have you for my own, I'm intensely glad of the prospect of a call into other intensities. There! I think that's the longest speech I ever made in my life. Not even my reports as resident director of the *scuola* were so long!"

"But war!" she cried protestingly. "War! Barbarity! Relapse into barbarism, destruction! You are glad of war?"

"No. Of course not really. Not with my mind, dear Donna Cordelia, not with my reason. But there is more to me than mind and reason. I think I may not be altogether sorry to give them a brief vacation."

"You, too!" she cried, marveling.

"What do you mean?" he asked her.

"Nothing. I don't know. But it astonishes me to see that with you, too, traditions, impulses, take the place of reason—even tempers can take its place! And with you!"

"I suppose I should be flattered that you have held me superior to the general human qualities," he said with a



Side by side they stood, looking down upon the little fellow.

smile. But it was a wistful smile. "You're right—I'm a man like any other——"

"No, not like any other!" she cried vibrantly, sweetly, with one of her warm rushes of generosity. "Much less self-seeking, much more true and kind and sincere."

"Ah, you think of me in that way only because the traditions that rule me—in place of my reason—are more or less your traditions, too! But let's not talk of me. Let's talk of you—and of

the boy. It's foolish, but I don't know his name?" he ended inquiringly.

A dark flush stained Cordelia's fair face.

"He was baptized Beneditto," she told him in a muffled voice. "He—was baptized—while I was still ill. I did not know. It was a—revenge. I hadn't cared duly for my husband's brother, Count Benedict. We call the boy 'Mimi.' It serves while he is a little fellow."

"The brute!"

Eustis growled the word out in spite of himself. His fists were clenched. Cordelia smiled faintly.

"Merely a man to whom his own traditions are very dear," she corrected him gently.

"The brute!" repeated Eustis Nesbit again, as if he had not heard her. Then he composed his face.

"But tell me more—tell me the things I want to hear. About you, and the way you spend your days, and the flowers you plant and the clouds you watch—— Ah, tell me things to remember if I must go away—forever!"

"There's very little to tell," she answered composedly. "My husband lives chiefly in Naples, with little trips to the other cities and little vacations among the Swiss lakes. He comes here semioccasionally. We are—it's no secret; any of the goatherds on the

rocks up there"—she nodded toward the mountains—"could tell you, if I should forbear—we are estranged. I refuse to live with him on grounds that—that I should make public if he forced me to do so, by trying to annul our marriage and to gain possession of my boy, for example! He has threatened that. He threatens it no longer, for I have told him that I should make my answer heard even in the Vatican. After all, he doesn't want that!

"He—he comes here sometimes—generally on the errand on which I suppose he used to come most frequently in the days when you knew the Pirenzas better than I did! He dislikes it that I spend my income, which is not a very vast one, for the people. He has prospered, I believe, in his own undertakings. But he seems as much in need as ever of the money that he derives from this estate. And I teach in the school—and work in the hospital. And my sister-in-law comes every spring with her children. She is very good to me—Antoinette. She thinks I'm a mad creature, but she does not withhold her love and companionship from me on that account. And the Hardinge children are dears."

"She was always a good woman in her blindly impulsive way. She has a warm heart. Sometimes I think she is almost the only Italian of rank who ever had one. Cold hearts, hot blood—that is the usual combination. But go on."

"That is all. That—and Mimi."

"All?"

"And the thought of my true friend," she added, looking at him out of grateful eyes. "I have thought of you every day since I came out into the sunlight after that long, dreadful time of weariness, and found that you had really meant it—that you had really gone!"

"How do you think of me, Cordelia?"

"As the finest gentleman I ever knew."

She spoke gravely. He colored and the flush accentuated the strange look of youth about his face.

"That is not so," he disclaimed her praise. "But—I'm glad of so much. But—Cordelia—all your life—what is to become of it? By and by you will either reconcile yourself to Count Flaviano——"

"Never," she answered firmly.

"Or—you must admit some other—emotion—to your heart."

"I have my boy."

"Dear child, do you not realize that his father will make plans for the boy's education that will separate him from you? His father—is proud of him?"

"Grudgingly so. His father declares that the boy's infirmity—my little son is a cripple, did you know?—is to be laid at my door. And at first he was ashamed that his son should be maimed—his son, a Pirenza! But Mimi's mind is so wonderful— Don't laugh! It is, truly."

"I never dreamed of laughing!" he protested quickly.

"That he has won his father in spite of everything."

"Then don't you see how it is fore-ordained that he will make his own plans for the lad's education—the schools, the colleges, the army— Ah, no, I forgot! That will not be——"

"Then I thank God the boy is a cripple!" cried Cordelia, with flashing eyes.

"Don't say it, my dear! Don't say it, though it is not strange a woman should feel so. But his future will be taken from your hands—and then what? What are you going to do with your life? Oh, Cordelia, if only you had loved me, if only we had left this place—this beautiful, oppressed, accursed place! But I had not meant to talk to you like this. I had only meant to be a middle-aged sentimentalist, come to take a picture of his shining lady's face away with him. I have the pic-



ture—I'm going away. Forgive me for talking like a fool."

"I shall remember nothing that you wish me to forget," she answered steadily. "But you will stay at least long enough to see Mimi, will you not? He is having his nap now, but he'll be about again in the afternoon. And my friend Louise is coming. You remember I told you of her, the head of the Cape of Good Hope? She's married her old suitor, and she's in Italy, on her way here. I should like you and her to meet—my two best friends."

"I'll stay," he answered. "And you'll forget that the man whose scruples were too fine to let him subscribe to the Thirty-nine Articles has confessed a blackguardly desire to run away with his neighbor's wife?"

"No, I shall not forget it," replied Cordelia, with a faint smile, partly for the whimsical quality of his voice and the mockery in his kind, tired eyes. "I shall think with pride that you care for me so. I should never do it, you know—run away with you, I mean. Even if I had not Mimi, I should not do that. No—not for all the good, noble, conventional reasons you attribute to me"—she shook her head firmly—"but because I care a great deal too much for you to cheat you. Yes, it would be cheating. I spent all my treasure, you see, on a counterfeit gem; I have no treasure left to give for a genuine. And that is why I would not run away with you even if I had no Mimi to keep my heart at home and—even if you really wanted me to!"

He looked at her, started to speak, thought better of it, and, kissing her hand, went away.

#### CHAPTER XVII.

Whatever Louise Babbitt surmised in regard to Cordelia's unhappiness, she asked no awkward questions, she veiled her eyes in discretion, and she gave herself up unreservedly to the enjoy-

ment of Mimi and the wild and picturesque beauty of Rocca Pirenza. She told, with a laugh and a sigh, of her final capitulation to her faithful wooer. Her board of trustees had suddenly proved refractory; they had—Louise sometimes had resource to the vernacular—"butted in" upon her management of the James Winant House. They had objected to her joining of the Progressive Party, and they had been very solemnly and formally disapproving when she had lent the assembly hall—did Cordelia remember how the assembly hall had looked on her wedding day?—to a band of homeless "unemployed" as a temporary sleeping place. In short, there had been growing friction, for day by day her heart had become increasingly soft toward the derelicts of the industrial world, and day by day the trustees' hearts had become increasingly hard toward all movements that threatened diminished dividends. So—the donor of the Babbitt fund happening to come to New York at the psychological moment—why, there you were!

"I was a fool not to have done it before," said Louise candidly. "I shall have no children."

"Ah, you, to whom so many children owe what is more than the mere gift of breath!" cried Cordelia, with generous sympathy. "Not," she added, "that it isn't the greatest sweetness in the world to have one of your very own, to cuddle and watch and adore and be a fool about!"

"Well, you must let me be a sort of postgodmother to him, to your Mimi, I mean. When are you going to bring him home to see his mother's country, Cordelia?"

Cordelia was vague. Louise did not press the question.

Flavian arrived from his Swiss lakes on the second day of the Babbitts' visit. He had lost none of his old power to charm, Cordelia realized, as she watched



Mr. Babbitt fall an easy victim to the lure of his friendliness, of his frankness, and as she beheld even the shrewd and always hostile Louise insensibly melt into graciousness. To Eustis, coming to the dinner that Cordelia had arranged as a meeting between him and Louise, Flavian was delightful. A real respect gave solidity to his sometimes too effervescent cordiality.

Cordelia saw it, and she saw, too, that the Englishman's sensitiveness was touched upon the raw by the open-heartedness of the man whose wife he loved. There was nothing modern about Eustis, she told herself, half pityingly, half admiringly. He was still ruled in his feelings by that ancient gentleman's code which made it shame for a man to eat the salt of one whose wife he coveted. Flavian, she knew, could be a woman's lover and her husband's intimate at the same time without a pang of conscience, without even a qualm of distaste. But with Eustis, life was different and much harder. He made little impression upon Louise, whom Cordelia had expected to find in him an affinity at once; he could make no impression upon any one, as he sat there, pale, austere-looking, quiet. Every time he emerged from the dim regions of unhappy thought in which he was obviously living, it was because Flavian, with a tact that was admirably spontaneous, insisted upon his emergence.

They were toying with the fruits at the end of dinner. The talk had been of the possibilities of war, the women voicing their detestation of the thought, the men according them scant attention. Eustis, expectant of England's immediate entrance into hostilities, was grave; Babbitt, not so closely concerned, was philosophical. But Flavian was ardent. War was what the world wanted to cleanse it of the corruption of commercialism, he cried. Cordelia could have laughed aloud. He

to condemn commercialism! But he seemed sincere in all that he said—sincere and oblivious of his own personal history. War, he said, was needed to give the young men ideals of patriotism and liberty; and war was what Italy especially needed to make that union of fifty years ago real and enduring, to weld those loosely confederated provinces into an indissoluble homogeneity, even as the Franco-Prussian War had been the means of consolidating Germany.

To every word that he uttered, Cordelia's heart made passionate denial. War, she cried, had been the curse of Italy; one despoiler after another had ravaged her. The army that she maintained impoverished her. And, anyway, did not her treaty obligations compel her to fight with her old enemies, her zealously hated Austrians?

Flavian had answered hotly, declaring that Austria and Germany had already so violated the terms of the treaty with Italy by making an aggressive war upon Serbia, and this without consultation with Italy, as to have already absolved her from her obligations.

But when the fruits came on, there was a little respite from war talk.

"Do you bring Cordelia no message from her old friends of the Cape of Good Hope quarter?" Flavian suddenly asked Louise.

"Many," answered Louise promptly. "I've been horribly remiss about delivering them. But there was so much to talk about. Cordelia, what do you think? You remember *Ciro Palisi*? He's— Why, what is it?" For Cordelia, whiter than the satin of her frock, had leaned back in her chair and had gasped as if for breath. Not since the dreadful night of her final quarrel with Flavian had she heard the name of *Ciro Palisi*. She shuddered to think that she was to learn now of his murder—that she sat at the very table with his murderer, suave, brilliant, eager—alive!

"Nothing," answered Cordelia, reaching for a glass of liqueur.

She felt Flavian's eyes upon her. She struggled for control and succeeded in attaining a measure of it.

"Well," said Louise, going on with her recital, though obviously a little perturbed by Cordelia's manner, "he has prospered exceedingly, and he's betrothed, if you please, to Maria Feretti — Why, Cordelia!"

For Cordelia, slowly rising to her feet, had turned eyes of fright and unbelief upon her old friend and then suddenly swayed and would have fallen but for Babbitt's arms.

There was a hubbub at the table. Water and salts were called for. Madeline was summoned. Louise thought that their hostess must be sent to bed.

"No, no, no!" cried Cordelia strongly when she emerged from their ministrations. "I will not go. I want to hear everything—everything—about the Ferettis. You know they were native here. They were Flavian's people."

Her eyes burned accusingly toward him. He answered her with a brilliant gaze of triumph and defiance.

"Oh, I had forgotten," said Louise. She looked in perplexity from one to the other of them. "Well, I don't know that there is much more to tell. Prosperity visited the whole group. Ciro, I think, got ahead on his own merits. He's a partner in that importing concern in which he used to be employed. But the Ferettis, so they told me, had some sort of an inheritance. I never made out what it was. You know their power of dissimulation when they have anything to conceal, the Italians— Oh, I beg your pardon, Count Flavian!"

"Not at all," said Flavian amiably. "It's quite true. We do know how to keep our own counsel. It is a compliment, signora. You have made no faux pas. It requires no apology."

"You're very good," murmured Louise.

But he was not looking at her, she discovered when she sought to meet his glance; he was staring hard at Cordelia, whose eyes were burning back into his.

"Well, that is all," she continued. "The Ferettis receive a stipulated sum each month through some Italian lawyer of the neighborhood. And Maria, that baby— You remember what a mere baby she was, Cordelia?"

Cordelia nodded.

"Well, she's ten now, and so grown! And such a pretty minx she's becoming! She used to look half starved, but she's sleek and plump and sparkling now. And she's to marry Ciro, so they all say, when she's fourteen. The boys have done well, Dominic and Tony. And the whole family seems utterly devoted to Ciro. Maria sent you her love, Cordelia, especially."

It seemed to Cordelia that the evening would never end. She wanted to see her husband alone, to question him, to find out what it meant. Had he really spared his enemy? Or had his plans miscarried? Was Louise's tale the marvel, the unbelievable wonder, to him, that it had been to her, Cordelia? She must see him alone. She must learn from him whether it was chance or conscience that had saved him from the crime of murder; whether he was a civilized man by the voluntary choice of civilized methods or by the mere failure of savage ones. She could hardly wait for the evening to end, for Eustis to say good night, for the Babbitts to go to their rooms. What did it all mean? What especially did Flavian's look toward her mean? His glance of pride and defiance, of a meaning that was dark to her, shook her to her soul; the dark antagonism of that look filled her with excitement as his looks had been able to excite her in that past which seemed so dead—the days when they had first met, first loved.

At last Eustis had gone, making his

farewells almost awkwardly. Flavian's grace of easy friendliness had never stood out in more brilliant contrast. Across the intense, absorbed questioning of Cordelia's mood, there passed for a second a pang of pity and of admiration for the more inarticulate soul; she understood the depths that the less facile man could never learn to show—she understood, she honored and loved them. And she had learned so thoroughly to distrust the quick, fluid emotions, the swiftness in demonstration, of the other! Yet the second passed in an impatient wish that the parting were well over, that she might give herself up to questioning her husband, to gaining some new light upon that baffling personality of his.

But when Eustis had gone, Flavian turned to Louise and said:

"You and Cordelia will have a thousand things of which to talk. I'm going to take your husband out for a smoke on the terrace, if you will allow him to go. I know that American husbands are severely managed men! And I'm going to tell both of you ladies good night. I've told Bianca to make me up a bed in Benedict's quarters, and I shall turn in early. I've been long in the saddle to-day, and so I shall be again to-morrow. I'm compelled to return to Naples at once, after a brief session with Neri, my man of business here. Though that's a misnomer, isn't it, Cordelia? You're the real man of business on the place, except for certain dull and dingy details. You American women are wonderful, Mrs. Babbitt. And my wife is the most wonderful of you all, I think! Good night."

He kissed her hands. Cordelia gazed at him entreatingly. But he was blind to the passionate questioning of her eyes. With his usual air of friendliness, he passed his arm through Babbitt's and they sought the terrace.

Ten minutes sufficed to show Louise

that Cordelia was not in the mood for talk, indeed that she was only present in the flesh. Her mind was absent. Mrs. Babbitt yawned ostentatiously and rose.

"My dear," she said to the younger woman, "it may be possible at your age to stand these terrible mountain journeys without succumbing, but it isn't at mine. I'm going to my own quarters now, and all the rest of our gossip will have to wait until morning."

Cordelia's eyes thanked her as they kissed and parted.

Should she go to Benedict's quarters? She had never entered them, and the Italian servants had thought it due to a superstitious fear which really endeared her to them, as showing that she was not entirely inhuman despite her many vagaries, her belief in the power of water and air, for example! Or should she strive to waylay her husband in the morning? She had better seek the interview now; if he were returning so promptly to Naples, it would be useless to attempt it in the morning. She waited by her window until the faint odor of tobacco ceased to trouble the heliotrope-laden air of the terrace and the sound of the men's voices and laughter no longer rose to her. She had sent Madelina away when she and Louise had come to her rooms.

The nursery lay beyond her dressing room. She crossed lightly to it. Mimi was sleeping the rose-leaf sleep of happy childhood. His black lashes curled upon his round cheeks. Cordelia's heart swelled to aching as she looked down upon him. She did not kiss him lest she should disturb him. But her lips moved.

"My darling, my darling!" she murmured, and with a hand as light as a drifting petal she drew the coverlid about his body. Then she went away.

Perhaps the child's father was not, after all, a murderer, in act or intent! If Flavian could persuade her of that,

it seemed to her that she could love him again—at any rate, she could yield him devotion, obedience, grateful duty! Until the hope had been born in her through Louise Babbitt's talk, she had not dreamed how she had suffered under the thought of her boy's immediate heritage.

She went along the stone corridor and came to the stairs leading up to the story in which Benedict, the wild, the lawless, the wicked, had had his apartment. The treads were worn down at the middle edges from the centuries of human beings that had trod them—men at arms, priests, pleasure lovers, statesmen, women, children—all that dim throng whose ideals dwelt in the spirit of Flavian Pirenza, her husband, and doubtless, too, in the spirit of her child. It was ghostly. She felt them all about her—and she was only Cordelia Stimson, whose father had hated all foreigners and whose training had been opposed in every detail to everything that these steps represented and recalled.

Two hundred years or so before that night, some angry fist, mail-clad, had hammered at the walnut panels of a door. The crack still showed. Through it there came a gleam of light. Cordelia, who had parted from her husband in bitter anger more than three years before, who had never since seen him alone, rapped timidly upon the panel. She called out softly:

"Flavian, it is I, Cordelia. May I come in? I want to speak to you."

She heard the sound of a chair scraping the floor. Then there was a momentary pause, as if Flavian were considering the question. She heard him moving something. There was a clatter of breaking glass upon the floor, a muttered exclamation, a pause. Then the door jerked open, and he faced her.

"Come in," he said shortly.

He closed the door behind her. He had been sitting at a desk, on which

there was a mass of papers—memoranda, she supposed, of the matters that he would take up with Neri in the morning. Often the thought of his dealings with his people had filled her with sadness, with anger, with bitterness; to-night it was negligible—everything in the world was negligible—if only he could tell her that Mimi's father was not stained with blood. She sat down in the chair he pulled forward for her, and he seated himself again at the desk. Fragments of broken glass lay at her feet.

"Well?" he questioned her after a moment.

His cordiality, his gay friendliness, were gone. His look was like the one she remembered when they had come to that dreadful parting of their ways—a look of cold, unconquerable hostility at the woman who had dared to criticize and to oppose him! It chilled the warm hope at her heart, but she forced her lips to frame her plea.

"Flavian, will you explain to me about *Ciro Palisi*? You heard what Louise said. I—I—beg you to tell me whether you—spared him, or whether he—escaped you—your agents."

She bent a little toward him as she spoke. Earnestness had sent a color into her pale cheeks and her eyes were dark in their beseeching.

"Why do you wish to know? It is merely a question whether I am a sentimental fool or a bungling fool. Apparently I am one or the other, since the man is alive. I either allowed him to live like a weakling, or I failed in my plans. Why do you seek to learn which sort of fool I am?" His voice was gibing and bitter.

"Flavian, I beg you to tell me! It means—everything to me. I—oh, on my knees I will ask your forgiveness if I have wronged you all this time! On my knees I will beg your pardon! I—I will—"

"You will be a submissive and affec-

tionate wife as a punishment for your sin in having judged me wrongly?"

He seemed to taunt her. She flushed more vividly.

"I will be anything you wish if only you can tell me that Mimi's father did not—is not——"

"Even if I should set your mind at rest about Mimi's father," he said with a cold sneer, "there is still Mimi's grandfather, and Mimi's great-grandfather, and Mimi's uncle. I don't see that you will gain enough, even according to your own pale-blooded standards, to make it worth while for you to submit to me again."

"You are mocking my earnestness," she said, "for I am utterly in earnest. However illogical it may seem to you, I care—I care intensely!—to learn that Mimi's father is not a murderer."

He scanned her with cold, contemptuous, hostile eyes. For a minute he was silent. Then, shaking his head and laughing, he answered:

"Think what you please, my countess! I shall tell you nothing. You see"—his manner grew very deliberate and his voice cut like a taut silken string—"I am not concerned to win your forgiveness or your good will. You can offer me nothing for which I have any desire at all. As for my son, let it be enough for you that he is a Pirenza, with all the Pirenza inheritances, whatever they may be! And he shall have the Pirenza training when the time comes. He shall belong to his family and to his nation—in so far as the accursed affliction with which you endowed him permits him to belong to his nation! Now, if you have nothing else to ask me——". He rose, bowed mockingly, and waited for her to leave.

She drew herself slowly to her feet. He would not tell her what she longed to hear. Instead, he taunted her with the boy's imperfection—taunted her! The blood rose in a great wave to her head, dizzying her, half blinding her.

But through the red mist the handsome, dark face mocked her. For the fraction of a second, her hand clenched itself to strike that dark, smiling face. Then her fingers unclosed limply. She had another impulse.

"To-morrow I shall make Eustia take me away from here," she thought quietly within her heart, and felt sustained, "Mimi and me."

At the same instant her eyes, directed thither by she knew not what power, glanced toward the chiffoier on which Flavian's brushes and bottles were spread. A great photograph of a woman stood there, in a silver frame. The glass protection had gone. She recognized Vittoria Cambi. She remembered the sound of the breaking glass. Had he been trying to hide this sentimental evidence of his passion at her coming? It seemed unlikely. It would have been more like him to try to flaunt before her eyes the proof of his love for another woman. She felt no particular emotion at sight of the fine, brooding, cameolike face, pale in its cloud of black hair. Strange the tempest of feeling that had once rocked her at thought of what that woman had been to her husband! What eternities of experience and heartaches lay between her and the ardent girl who long ago in Florence had forgiven this man an old affair with this woman! Her negligent, indifferent eyes came back from the pictured loveliness of her husband's mistress to her husband, eagerly watching her.

"Good night," she said and walked toward the door.

He held it open for her, his dark eyes still burning upon her, but with a new expression. After the door had closed, and she had turned toward the stairway, she thought she heard it open again, and she thought she heard a whispered, pleading "Cordelia!"

But she walked swiftly to her own room. To-morrow she would tell Eus-





1000 Cordelia was still there when the messenger rode in, although the old man had allowed as theirs. But it seemed to her that her





his panting beast to lag. She could not gratify the villagers by any such show of grief heart was a lump of sharp ice in her bosom.

tis that she would go with him—she and Mimi.

The next morning she was at breakfast when a note from Eustis was brought to her:

By the time you receive this, my dear lady, I shall be far down the mountain on my way home to England. I came to see you, to talk with you without reserves. I have seen you, I have talked; you know my heart. Why do I stay longer, only to teach myself what I already know—that I love you and that the sight of you is a joy and a torment to me? It is not a time for an Englishman to waste his strength in futile emotions, and so I am going. I shall write to you sometimes, as long as—I may. There is a hard time coming for our dear people of Rocca Pirenza. You will be their solace. God keep you. E. N.

"So," said Cordelia, setting aside her chocolate cup. "So! It seems that I have no one. No one at all but my little boy."

#### CHAPTER XVIII.

The winter had been a terribly hard one. The whole world seethed in unrest, and even that forgotten, forlorn little hamlet clinging perilously to the mountainside felt the movements of the great world. The drafting officers were busier than ever; the reserves of the mountainside were held in readiness for mobilization at any moment. From the day when Italy had refused to join her allies in their war upon Serbia, every Italian had known it was only a question of time before she would join with those allies' enemies.

Cordelia marveled at the feeling. All the men and women old enough to have memories waited praying for the call to arm against Austria. She felt the spirits of the people tugging against restraint, like a reined horse chafing to be free. Even the younger ones, who had only tradition to foster their hatred, waited the call to arms with eagerness. Some of the old women shook their heads and spoke sadly of war and of the desolation that follows

war, but their voices were drowned in the clamor about them.

Flavian came and went. They did not see each other alone. He was hurried on all his visits, and he was generally accompanied by other young men, very busy, very important. He made one trip to the United States during the winter; Cordelia had suddenly known what heartbreak was like when she had learned by a letter that he was gone. To think that he should see her country, and that she should be here, in this desolate hamlet, among these savages! What had been the matter with her that she had not gone home long ago? Ah, she knew! She could not leave her boy, and she knew that her husband would never consent to the child's going home with her. He would follow, he would take the boy. And she would be powerless, for she was a woman of this country, now, bound by its laws! Then, too, the people—the savages, the children, she scarcely knew what to call them—had come to lean upon her so! No, she could not abandon them—she could not abandon her husband's people, she could not abandon Eustis Nesbit's work. Flavian, she was told, had gone over on a commission about arms. The world was war mad. He was back in a month, glowing over orders placed.

She had letters from Eustis, lying the long winter through in the trenches near Ypres. She seemed to herself to be living in a dream, so little did the fact of his present danger, of Flavian's approaching, inevitable, courted danger, of the certain widowing of this village of hers, here among the crags, seem to touch her heart with fear or horror or any poignant emotion. She read Eustis' letters eagerly; she smiled over the stories of the "Boches" and the recruits, of the Canadians who had made a brilliant charge and who were so forgivably conscious of its brilliancy, of the reveling in baths and sleep when

the welcome days of relief from the trenches came, of all that made up his life back there. And she did not know why she felt so little emotion concerning him.

Antoinette enlightened her. Antoinette came to her when spring broke in the mountains. Antoinette had gray hair in a sudden streak upon her temple and made no effort to hide the fact. Lionel, she said, with unashamed rejoicing, would be too old for service unless the demand came for very old men indeed; Lionel was, thanks to the Blessed Virgin and all the saints, over forty-five. But he was going home to do what he could. If he was fit for nothing else, he said, he could go about the country buying horses for the army. He still knew a horse when he saw one! So they were all going over, she and the children with him; and she had come to bid her sister-in-law good-by and to kiss the boy. It was proof of how deeply Cordelia had managed to enter the little woman's heart, for even when spring had broken, Rocca Pirenza was not an easy journey for that sybaritic lady.

"Of course you two people make me so angry I could shake you both," said Mrs. Hardinge, when she had come, with commendable directness, to the theme of her brother's relations with his wife. "Why don't you have a real, out-and-out fight and make it up? If he would beat you, and you would throw things at him, and then you would both rush tearfully into each other's arms, I could understand you! However, that doesn't seem to be the way you arrange your affairs. It's a pity, for of course you know that we're bound to get into this war—we Italians—and that Flavian will be in the thick of it and that then your heart will be broken for remorse over your coldness. For you care for him, whatever you may think! And he loves you——"

"Please don't abuse that word," said Cordelia, with some asperity.

"But he does. Oh, he may not know it, but I know it! Everything that he has done has been a sort of effort—perfectly useless—to prove to himself that he doesn't love you! Pouf! Ask Vittoria Cambi——"

"Antoinette, you are unpardonable!"

"No, I'm not. I'm daring to talk. You two idiots surround yourself with great silences and are amazed that neither knows the truth about the other. Vittoria—I suppose I'm shocking because I still keep up my acquaintance with her, but I do!—poor Vittoria!—she knows. She says so."

"Antoinette!"

Antoinette subsided before the outrage in Cordelia's voice and changed grumblingly to another topic.

"Poor Eustis Nesbit was lucky, wasn't he?"

"Eustis Nesbit?"

Cordelia caught the edge of a table between her fingers in an effort to steady a world that began to quiver about her. The daze, the dream, in which she had spent the winter, seemed on the point of being broken, of being broken with an unendurable pain. She was coming out of an anæsthetic peace into sharp, cruel realizations.

"Yes. Don't you get the English papers? Oh, of course, your mails are maddening here. Lionel heard in Florence. He's home badly wounded—Why, Cordelia!"

The pain had been very sharp indeed, and Cordelia had moaned. She sat upright now and stared at Antoinette with frightened eyes.

"Badly? How badly?" she half panted.

Antoinette looked at her curiously.

"Why, Cordelia!" she said again. And then, in an uninflected voice, as if she were repeating a lesson: "Badly, but not mortally. He is in hospital in England. It—it is probable he will not be able to go back. He—he lost an arm. There were other injuries, too."

Cordelia sat quite still and looked at her sister-in-law. It seemed to her that her body was pierced with pain, that she was suffering in her own flesh the wounds of her friend. His kind, homely face rose before her eyes, his whimsical smile, his awkward figure, clad in shabby clothes. She saw the glint of humor in his eyes, that held, too, so much of sadness; she saw the children of Rocca Pirenza stumbling before him, she heard their shrill little voices calling him "*maestro*."

"Why, Cordelia!" said Antoinette yet again, watching her sister-in-law's face. There was no reproach in her voice. She rose and kissed the younger woman. "He's going to pull through, dear," she said, and Cordelia clung to her with sudden weakness and wept upon her curiously kind, worldly, incomprehensible shoulder.

Antoinette's sharp little face was saddened, but she said, with that outspoken habit of hers:

"Of course, I'm sorry for Flavian—he's my brother, and I adore him—but I will say that he has only himself to blame for it!"

Cordelia's head came up swiftly at that, and her eyes dried themselves of tears. She caught Antoinette by her thin shoulders.

"Antoinette!" she cried. "Antoinette! You aren't imagining— You don't suppose—"

"I'm imagining nothing but the truth. I'm supposing nothing but the simple facts. I'm perfectly sure that you two never exchanged a guilty look, much less a guilty caress! The more fools you, if you ask me—with Flavian acting as he pleased all over Italy! No, I don't mean that, Cordelia. I think that a wife has no business with affairs. But you two dear, high-minded creatures, who came to love by way of friendship—such a dull way it seems to me!—oh, I understand you both! It's a cheerful world, isn't it? I'll go to the

hospital the instant I arrive in England, and I'll tell you exactly how he is. The truth, honor bright, as Lionel teaches the children to say!"

And by and by she was gone, with her shrewdness and her insight, her callous probing of the hearts of others, her kindness, her lack of principle. And the feverish, unreal days of waiting and suspense went on.

Flavian came back to his home a few days before the official announcement of Italy's entrance into the war was made. He was excited, jubilant. He talked much to Mimi about patriotism, about his ancestors and the traditions of the house of Pirenza. Even had it been possible for her to stay his discourse, Cordelia found herself lacking the impulse to do so. There was no bitterness left in her heart toward any one. She had suffered much, but she perceived dimly that all her suffering was in the nature of the case. Recklessly, regardlessly, she had thrown aside her own traditions, her own beliefs, without having been really converted to those that she had seemed about to adopt. It was not Flavian's fault that she had suffered—not altogether his fault, at any rate. It was destiny that had made them desire each other without knowing each other. She pitied him intensely.

He was to make an early start in the morning to join his regiment. He came to her room late the night before. He looked at her when she called out, "Come in!" to his knock, with a boyish look of pleading.

"I wanted to take a look at the little chap; may I?" he asked.

"Of course," she answered.

She led the way through her dressing room to the boy's nursery, switching on the electric lights as she went—those tangible evidences of Flavian's impregnation by the modern spirit, for all his feudalism! Beside the crib, she turned as if to leave him. She wanted to be

generous; she wanted him to have his moment with his son—perhaps his last moment with his son—without her hostile presence near. But he put out his hand, touching her on the arm, and said:

"Don't go. I only wanted to see him asleep."

Side by side they stood, looking down upon the little fellow. A nerve throbbed in her throat. All over the world there were fathers and mothers united in the love of a child, standing beside little cribs; and this was the first time she and Flavian, who had loved each other so, had ever stood together beside their sleeping child.

After a moment he turned away. He sighed.

"A noble little boy," he said. "He is like you, Cordelia."

Her color flamed as she switched off the light and returned to her own room. He followed her. He stood hesitating for a moment when they reached it.

"May I talk to you a minute, Cordelia?" he asked.

She nodded, and he sat down opposite her.

"We may not have many more chances to talk together," he said; and then, as her face contracted with pain, he added: "There, there, that was an ill-considered remark. I don't wish to make you gloomy, or to make myself gloomy, though, to tell the truth, there is no gloom to me in the thought of dying in service for my country. It's the one sort of death I would choose, were choice allowed us in the little matter."

"Don't talk about dying, Flavian," she said. "I— There is much for you to live for. And to live and serve your country is finer, I think, than to die."

"I remember your views," he said with a smile. "When you first came, you used to tell them to me. No more war, no more poverty, no more crime—

it was a pretty little tame paradise you outlined. Ah, well! You may be right. Who knows? But I am glad that I shall go marching into battle, my dear! If it is a medieval wish, why, perhaps I am a medievalist. And you won't begrudge me my medieval opportunity?"

"I begrudge you nothing that you want, Flavian," she told him unsteadily, her lips quivering.

"I believe you," he answered, with sudden earnestness and directness. "I believe you, Cordelia. I believe you to be the most generous of women—the most generous of human beings. I—before I go—"

His voice broke, and she interrupted him with swift divination of his intent.

"Don't!" she cried. "*Don't!* You mustn't ask for my forgiveness, though indeed you have it! As freely as I have yours, I know."

"You have done me no injury. On the contrary—"

"I did you the injury of marrying you without knowing you."

"You gave me a fortune, and you gave up another fortune for my sake as carelessly as a child blows bubbles into the air and watches them fade away. Ah, it was royal, Cordelia, though I didn't know how royal then! You gave me your love, so much more rich and beautiful than any fortune could be—"

"Don't!" she cried.

She felt her self-control leaving her. Remembering the glory and the glamour of their love and the first months of their marriage, she felt the wild urge of tears. All that to have been wasted! All that to have been lost! All that to have been a delusion!

"The most generous woman in the world," he repeated dreamily. "But I took it all as my right, and I—resented the little things. I suppose I wanted you to believe me and everything connected with me perfect. You see—you



were right. It's bad to bring boys up to believe that the world must bend to their wishes. It's bad to bring them up in a little world that *does* bend to their wishes. I think that with our boy you must— Ah, well, I shall come home to help you rear him myself. Cordelia—if I come back—have you forgiveness in your heart for me?"

"Oh, hush, hush!" she sobbed.

"But have you?"

"Of course."

"And—love, Cordelia?"

She ceased her sobbing. Love? But what was love? This great yearning to comfort all aching hearts? This intensity of pity and passion of patience? Or a desire for companionship? She wanted Flavian happy—it seemed to her that she could die to bring him happiness and scarcely mind the death pang—but love? She looked at him pitifully.

"In my heart there is only the desire for your happiness, Flavian. I want you happy."

"We're talking rather tragically, I think," he said with a change of manner. "There's no need of it. I shall come back—and shall be as bad-tempered, I suppose, and as difficult for you to understand, and as dull about understanding you. Or nearly so! Not quite so dull—never quite so dull again. Cordelia, I wanted to see you to talk with you about—about *Ciro Palisi*."

"Yes?" She whispered the word.

"Yes. You asked me and I refused to tell you, for some brutal reason of my own—but I spared him. I—I can't explain it to myself, for I give you my word of honor that I have no sympathy with your sentiment about my rights in the matter—not a particle! Yet I wouldn't have his death procured. I've never understood why. It was perverse of me. I liked to think that you were misjudging me—can you understand that? I hugged the thought of the wrong that you were doing me

in your mind to my very heart—the way the silly old saints used to hug their haircloth garments to their flesh! And when I made some provision for those Ferettis, I rejoiced even more in the thought of the injustice you were doing me. But—you know now. If it's any satisfaction to you to know that Mimi's father was not an assassin, as you call it, take the satisfaction, my dear. For he wasn't—though, as I once said, assassination—if you want to call it bad names—was practiced by Mimi's close relatives!"

"Don't!" she cried.

He watched her with a sad, whimsical look.

"We did love each other, Cordelia, once! Ah, well, no one can take those days from us. And—no other man can ever have you as I had you, my sweet! But it was a mistake. The medieval and the modern don't understand each other, and love didn't last long enough for them to learn the lesson. We'll have another, better try when I come back, shall we not, Cordelia? Will you kiss me good-by?"

Their cold lips clung together; her tears were salt upon his mouth. And then he was gone, and in the morning she saw him ride away down the mountain in the gold-and-red splendors of the dawn.

Days and the weeks followed. Rocca Pienza was a crippled village. It seemed that all the able-bodied men were gone. The women and the old men and the boys did the work in field and shop. And Cordelia, uplifted by some new force, upheld, inspired, was the very tower of strength upon which the stricken village leaned. She kept some semblance of the old order alive. There was still school for the little ones; there was care for the sick, help for the poor. She was consolation for the stricken wives and mothers. She was, they said, like the Blessed Lady



come down to earth for the aid of Rocca Pirenza.

Every day she was with them when the messenger with news from below rode up the stone-laid street and sprang from his sweating pony in front of the Albergo Twenty-second of September, as the dark little cave of a wine shop was proudly named. Every day she put strong, tender arms about the woman who most needed love and sympathy when the messenger had posted the bulletin. And every day she waited with a painful stricture of the throat to see her husband's name upon that list of killed or wounded.

One afternoon the messenger rode slowly up the narrow street. Usually he was flushed with importance. He was an old man and crippled with rheumatism, and his country could not use him in battle, but he swelled importantly before the little boys and the women and the old men who were not so close to the great war as he. But to-day he rode slowly. And he drew rein down the road, contrary to his custom. He spoke to a boy who had met him there to run the rest of the way to the little inn by his pony's side, entreating to be told news before the others. To-day the old man told him something.

"Go, Giovannetto," he cried. "Go, tell Madelina or another to take her lady home—to take our lady home. There is bad news for her. She should hear it in her castle, not out upon the street among the wenches and the common folk."

Giovannetto went on the wings of the wind. The old man allowed his panting beast to lag. But although the boy found Madelina in the crowd, and although Madelina sought out her mistress and spoke to her softly, Cordelia was still there when the messenger rode in.

He saluted them all, and he posted upon the board the news of the day. Such a glorious assault upon the en-

emy! Such a triumphant assault! And the men of Rocca Pirenza had been engaged in the victorious action. And the names of the dead were— He wrote them. And the wounded were— He wrote their names, and Count Flavian's was the first.

It was what she had known would come. She could not gratify the villagers by any such show of grief as theirs. But it seemed to her that her heart was a lump of sharp ice in her bosom.

She started that night on her journey to the base hospital to which he had been sent. She was all one intense, agonized prayer for his recovery. Death, this useless, wasteful, frightful death, was horrible to her. He must live! He must live! She herself, with her own slight strength, would fight this death that so arbitrarily claimed whom it would! She would fight it, she would conquer. No, not because of love alone, not because of the least hope of happiness, but because of her belief in life, her belief in all life, in Flavian's life! He had a right to it, she told herself fiercely. He had a right to it!

She thought of all the good and noble and winning qualities he possessed. Should they be destroyed? She thought of her young love for him. Had that not been truer, more intuitively right, than all the reasoned criticism, all the hostility, of her later days? Ah, but leave her out of it! What had she to do with him? He had a right to his life, he had a right to his life! He should be allowed his chance to develop all that vigor, all that nobility. It must not be snuffed out! War must cease. It must, it must! She, Cordelia Stimson, would find the way—

With what delays, with what petitions of authority, with what endless trouble, she finally found herself in possession of a pass for the hospital, she was never able to recount. All that part of the journey was mechanical.

The only thing alive, conscious, in her was her agonizing hatred of this wanton death, her fierce, half-insane determination that it must cease.

He was conscious when she was admitted to the hospital; she might see him. She went to the screened bedside. They told her that there was no hope at all; it was a miracle that he was still alive, so cruelly had the shrapnel torn him. One arm was gone, one side was horribly wounded. But he was conscious and he was waiting for her. He had been sure that she would come, the nurse told her.

"My darling," she said, clasping the one hand that he still possessed, "my dear one—you are to get well."

The fingers tried to close about hers. From the bandages came a voice:

"I knew you would get here—in time. I knew. So I waited. I— Never again, Cordelia. Never another chance."

She tried to speak, but he forbade it, imperious even in his faintness.

"No—you listen to me. Much to say. Such little time— Don't speak."

"I will listen, Flavian."

"See things better now," he whispered. She leaned over him to catch the words. "Loved you—truly. Hated sometimes—but loved. You believe?"

"Yes, yes, my darling."

"But—you were right. Should not have married, maybe. You and I too different. Too different. Wronged you. Cruel to you. Hating you because— You hated, too—"

"I understand. Only get better, Flavian, and we will know each other."

"No, no—too late—too old. I—Pirenza—Italian—could never learn. But—I see now. So much better, your way, Cordelia."

"No, no, no!" she cried passionately. "I was hard, narrow, selfish—"

"You were right," he insisted feebly. "Live for others—not make others live

for you. Work—be honest, kind—teach—work and love and peace and kindness— I was too old, Cordelia. But Mimi—"

"Yes, yes, my dearest."

"Take him home with you to—funny place. Cousin Susie's— Or to England when—when—the slaughter's past. Let him learn—the new ways. No feudal lord—no people his—except for him to help them—you understand?"

"Yes."

"The schools, the work—all the education—in America—England— Give me a drink." His lips were moistened. "Then let him come back to Italy—to Rocca Pirenza—"

"Yes."

"So perhaps, Cordelia—it will be made—right, not wrong, for us to have married. He—the little fellow—will make it right. Be good to the people at Rocca Pirenza, sweetheart. Ah, but you are! '*La donna di Rocca Pirenza*' they call you—did you know? Be good to them—you and— What is his name? The fellow at the schools. Always wanted me to help—tired me. But good. Did my work for me. You and he— Ah, yes, Nesbit—that's his name. You and he and Mimi—the little fellow, half you, half me— Ah, they are not so bad, these international marriages, my dear one! Not so bad!"

He began to hum a song about the night winds and the moon and love, a Venetian thing he had sung to her in New York, in Wheelville, on the steamer—everywhere; a light, pretty thing that she had once believed the very voice of love—of love whose voice was terrible, of love that was effort and suffering and endless forgiving and cruelty and tenderness unspeakable. Then he ceased to sing and said, in a loud, surprised sort of way:

"Cordelia, Cordelia! Do you see it—the light—the—"

# Facial Massage *and* Wrinkles

By Doctor Lillian Whitney

Dr. Whitney is always glad to answer all reasonable questions relating to beauty and health, but she cannot undertake to answer letters which fail to inclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope for reply, or to letters inclosing Canadian stamps. Every week she receives many letters of this sort, in spite of the notice always printed at the end of this department. Sometimes, even, the post office sends notification that letters are being held for her, which careless writers have posted with no stamp. If you have failed to receive a reply to your letter, you may know that it is for one of these three reasons.—EDITORS.

THE question is often asked, by women of fifty and over, whether there is any value in facial massage for eradicating wrinkles, discolorations, and other evidences of age and neglect.

One might as well ask whether cleaning and pressing a weather-worn, faded, dilapidated suit that has never seen brush or iron will restore its natural freshness. If, however, the greatest care is always given the suit by its owner, who knows that it can never be replaced by another, that it must serve a lifetime; if every day it is dusted, carefully folded, and properly laid away; if, while in use, it is treated with great consideration, never subjected to unnecessary wear and tear, and carefully guarded from wind and soil, its life may be preserved beyond any one's belief. This is, by the way, the secret of the Frenchwoman's "chic"—no matter how old and mended her shoes, they are always polished and their shape preserved; no matter how old her frock, it is always fresh and sweet.

Now, massage of the face and neck—for the two must always go together—is as necessary to the woman of thirty as milk is to a baby; that is, if she wishes to preserve a youthful appearance. In exceptional cases, the face remains unwrinkled into comparative old age, but this is rare except in people

of great serenity of mind or in those whose chosen life work is of an exalted nature. The average woman uses and abuses her face to an unwarranted degree; then laments the "ravages of time." Time has really very little to do with it except in the way of improvement, just as in the case of wine, trees, and everything else that undergoes beautiful growth and development in tranquillity.

Wrinkles are characteristic of distinguishing traits and features, and one might paraphrase the time-honored axiom, "By their deeds ye shall know them," into, "By their wrinkles you can tell them," and announce it as a great truth; for one's predominating state of mind is indelibly impressed upon the face. Thus, persons "set in their ways" invariably press the lips together until the habit, growing with age, forms a wrinkle on either side of the mouth that expresses determination in some and mere contrariness in others. Just as the constant dripping of water will wear away a stone, so the same facial grimace, repeated endlessly, will wear a line or wrinkle into the tissues.

This accounts somewhat for the type of wrinkle found on the faces of those engaged in various professions, as distinguished from one another. For instance, there is the talker's wrinkle. It begins at or near a line upon the cheek

seen in adults who approve tremendously of themselves; often it is merely a dimple. From this point, it runs down under the chin from side to side. It is seen upon the faces of many priests, ministers, lawyers, actors, orators, auctioneers, gossips, and—many women who talk overmuch. In the latter, it is not so deep as in those who talk professionally and who, beside, cultivate an expression set in these lines, as in the case of the characteristic "bishop's face."

Sometimes one sees wrinkles lying horizontally across the nose at its root. These denote ability for command and show that this faculty has been continually exercised; it is seen in all great executive characters—in generals, statesmen, and those who control and command others. Gladstone possessed these wrinkles, as did the famous Count von Moltke. Gladstone's face was marked further by a curious set of wrinkles on the forehead, rarely seen because they denote talent of a high order. In studying the face of England's "Grand old Man" as a whole, the dip that these wrinkles take directly over the nose may not impress one, but on separating the face into sections and observing it piecemeal, as it were, the forehead is instantly recognized as Gladstone's. One wonders to what strange attribute this is due, and then realizes that the form wrinkles take on the forehead—and elsewhere—depends upon the form of the underlying bone and muscle plus the characteristics of the individual. England has had but one "Grand old Man."

Wrinkles between the eyebrows, usually called frowns, are common enough. In some persons, three or four perpendicular lines are formed here, indicating a plodding, persevering nature. Many housekeepers, who spend much time in "polishing up the handle of the big front door," develop them. A lone wrinkle in this situation always excites

interest and speculation. It is usually observed on large, square-boned persons in whom the qualities of order and conscientiousness are conspicuous, and may be regarded as an accessory sign or feature.

The earliest wrinkles appearing about the eyes are caused by mirth; smiles and laughter trace indelible little lines at the outer corners of the eyes that grow longer and spread fan-shaped upon the cheeks with advancing years. They lend a very pleasing expression to the face. Many other wrinkles are found about the eyes and their lids, not by any means always due to age, but often proceeding from *habits* or occupations. Thus, deeply formed wrinkles *under the eyes in youth* are often caused by dissipation and other indulgences, while excessive use of the eyes gives rise to a wrinkle on the upper lid and to numberless fine lines on the lower one.

So it is with the chin. The curved wrinkle observed here is usually due to fat caused by a large appetite and a good digestion; in extreme cases two or three wrinkles are formed. They may occur here also in consequence of one's occupation necessitating the head being sunk forward upon the chest. They result, too, from faulty habits of holding the head, from gum chewing, grimacing, and from loss of elasticity of the skin either in premature or actual old age. Myriads of tiny wrinkles all over the face often follow a protracted illness, a long-enduring complaint, the wholesale use of cosmetics, the habitual use of cheap soaps, a querulous disposition. Obesity cures, by depriving the tissues of the fat upon which they feed, and which pad out the features as well, quite frequently cause premature wrinkles and lines upon the face.

So, in summing up, we can safely say: first, that such wrinkles as mar the beauty of the face and of its ex-

pression result from habits of the mind, from depraved conditions of the body, and from occupations; second, that they all are, in the main, preventable; third, that all can be removed if we possess sufficient force of will to resist indulging the habits of a lifetime, as well as the patience and perseverance necessary to treat the face and neck day by day until the traceries that we ourselves have woven there are gradually cleared away.

Now, in using so apparently simple a measure as facial massage, it is well to bear in mind the remarks of a well-known British physician on the subject:

"One cannot take James from the pantry or Bridget from the kitchen and start them to rubbing. The masseur who rubs a hole in his patient has mistaken his vocation." Very few people are qualified to give massage of any kind; facial treatments at the hands of those usually engaged in this work are a farce. A little woman who recently found herself at the end of her financial resources gleefully decided that she would "go into" beauty treatments, and forthwith notified the community to this effect! But there are, of course, some who have made a real study of the treatment, and these have more clients than they can attend to.

Any woman, however, can give herself scientific facial massage if she will spend a few pennies in anatomical charts of the muscles of the face and neck; and then study these carefully until she has mastered them. It is

*scientific massage by means of which results are achieved.* If, of course, one is satisfied to keep the skin clean and soft by covering it with creams and rubbing these off as one would use a towel or a face cloth, well and good; one accomplishes nothing more.

Now the underlying muscles, plus the uses to which they are habitually put, determine the character of the wrinkles. Take, for instance, the occipital muscle, which covers the forehead. When we raise the eyebrows, we throw it into horizontal lines—that is, if it is loose;

in some people it is very tight and never moves. Rub-

bing the forehead in a haphazard manner will not eliminate these wrinkles.

Study the muscle; it is flat, tough, and cannot be picked up and rolled between the fingers, but must be smoothed out against the underlying bone, much as a piece of fabric is

pressed out on an ironing board. Since rubbing the lines in the same direction in which they run would only deepen them, as

constantly folding a cloth deepens the crease, they must be massaged in the opposite direction. The best method of doing this is in circular movements, gently, forcibly, removing the seams.

The temporal muscle is a fan-shaped one that intersects some of the fibers of the occipital as well as those of the circular muscles that make up the eyelids. Furrows may form at these attachments and should be smoothed out in the same way. Now, just above the eyes are two little muscles that reinforce the brows, drawing them down-



Movement for crow's-feet and fretful lines.



ward and inward and producing the vertical lines known as "frowns." This muscle is the principal agent in the expression of suffering, as well as of deep thought, concentration, and so on. Beside this, it is used to emphasize speech, to reinforce or "drive home" a point, be it in admonishing a child, arguing with the "gude mon" as to the need of a new rug for the dining room, or putting over a big deal. So this is indeed a much abused little muscle, which sometimes enlarges tremendously under the strain and forms two heavy ridges above the eyes on which very much thickened, even overhanging, brows depend.

It is impossible to remove frowns unless the muscle habit is controlled, because they naturally form again and again; for this purpose plasters judiciously applied as eradicators are truly admirable. They put a clamp on the tissues and prevent the downward and inward drawing together of the muscle fibers. Worn during sleep, they assist in ironing out the furrows; worn through the day's activities at home, they act as a gentle remonstrance and really put a check on the frowning habit, as it were, thus greatly assisting the treatment, which consists in drawing the contracted muscles away from each other, smoothing out the frowns, and then rubbing deeply with the finger tips in circles until the skin glows. It is well to apply a plaster after massage, thereby carrying on the good work.

The circular muscle that makes up the eyelids consists of very loose tissue,

some of the filaments of which reach out like tendrils and blend in with the fibers of surrounding muscles. That is why crow's-feet are so indicative of one's disposition, tiny little fine lines revealing a fretful, faultfinding nature, while wrinkles of various lengths stretching out to the cheeks reveal a kindly soul, or one given to much laughter. There is very little fat in this situation; that is why the eyelids require an especial amount of care after youth is passed.

The attachment of the circular muscle is mainly at its inner side;

so massage should begin here, usually with one finger dipped in warm oil. Because of the delicacy of the eye, the treatment must be gentle when the lids are closed; but the upper one can also be raised and pressed against the bone above, and the lower given deep massage in a similar manner. A splendid

massage movement here consists of smoothing out the tissues with the finger tips of one hand and then

sweeping the entire region with the tips of the second and third fingers of the other hand, finishing each movement with a long sweep up past the temple into the hair. This process is truly marvelous in its rejuvenating effect when persistently carried out. Plasters worn at the outer angle of the eye hasten results.

Wrinkles around the mouth and chin should next claim our attention. The mouth consists of a circular muscle, too. Here, also, the tissues are extremely loose, so that haphazard treat-



Movement for chin and cheek massage.



ment merely results in moving the structures about a little and in stretching them.

With the fingers of one hand, hold the tissues firmly in position; then with the other hand apply friction and rolling massage, continually following the direction of the muscles.

The muscles of the chin are inserted into the lower jaw and are attached to the structures above—it is not necessary to go into their anatomical relations. Therefore, pressure with the palms of the hands, alternating with relaxation and always with an upward lift, will restore the structures of the chin, removing lines and superfluous flesh, too. As a rule, the cheeks will respond more quickly if the jaws are forcibly closed and the cheek muscles tensed. Then apply deep-seated, rolling massage, grasping the stiffened muscles and rolling them well between the forefinger and thumb. Deep, circular movements into the corners of the nose and well around the ears will chase away the tiny lines so apt to gather there.

Now study the neck, for here the telltale marks of neglect, carelessness, and age more quickly set their seal than on the face. The neck should be firmly rounded—too much fat is gross; when too lean, the skin becomes loose and shrunk. In the prevention of wrinkles and lines upon the throat, the tissues here should be stiffened, as explained so many times in these papers, and then rubbed vigorously until the circulation is heightened; redness and heat are the ends to be attained. Friction must be applied with the palm surfaces of the fingers and with the hand, using the right hand for the left half of the neck, and the left hand for the right side. Follow this by grasping the large muscles attached to the collar bone and rolling them up to their attachment upon the skull behind the ears.

This brief explanation has taken more time to write out plainly and sim-

ply than it will take any one to memorize the movements after studying a chart of the head and neck muscles. Ten minutes each day devoted to the process of preventing and—when they are already formed—of erasing unpleasant wrinkles, will be followed by undoubted success.

The treatment should always be followed by friction of the skin, which is as necessary as massage of the muscles. Friction, to be effectual, should be applied only when the skin is held taut and firm under the fingers of one hand. Then rub and polish and polish and rub as briskly as you please, going over the face and neck little by little until the entire surface has been covered. Remove any excess of cream and bathe the skin with an astringent wash. This should be done for several reasons—first, because the treatment is apt to open the pores, and second, because, when wrinkles exist, the skin is always relaxed.

It is needless to say, after having written so much on this subject heretofore, that massage and friction should never be applied to a *dry* skin. If the tissues need feeding, heat must first be applied in the form of hot, moist towels; twice a week is sufficient for this form of treatment. Then such ointments or creams should be rubbed in as are called for in each individual case. This is of extreme importance, for what is good in one case may be harmful in another; one may require a fattening cream, another plain massage cream, and so on. With a little careful study, every one can decide what are her individual needs.

It is the height of foolishness to purchase expensive toilet preparations simply because they are attractively got up and please the eye. It is the same with astringent washes *versus* so-called "toilet waters;" the latter consist usually of a little scented alcoholic water. Great care must be exercised in select-

ing an astringent for the face. What will have a tightening effect upon one skin will shrink another, and so on.

Distinctive formulas have been given in previous articles and will be repeated on personal application.

### Answers to Queries

DISCOURAGED.—I believe that any one can improve the condition of her skin, even though it be inherently bad, by stimulating the liver, changing the condition of all the fluids of the body, and applying a cream which many of my readers tell me they have used with good results. Would you like to hear more about this treatment?

BETTY.—No, yours is not the shade of hair to henna, unless you want it reddened. Chestnut hair, highly burnished, is most difficult to retain, as it is bound to grow darker with age. Peroxide of hydrogen applied lightly after each shampoo is the best treatment. Contrary to popular belief, this does not destroy the hair, as a mixture of peroxide of hydrogen and ammonia does. Plain, or diluted with water, it is an excellent tonic, promoting the growth of the hair. In applying it, use an absolutely clean brush dipped in the liquid and run lightly through the hair. If you hesitate to use this, I will gladly send you a formula for a tonic wash for light hair, which can also be used upon dark hair that is darkening at the roots.

HOMER.—While *acne* is a local disease, we are all agreed that it is an outward expression of a form of auto-intoxication. The chief reason why this condition is so obdurate in many instances is because no constitutional measures are pursued. Write me personally and fully for treatment.

ELAINE M.—There are some things that I do not believe in publishing and spreading broadcast. These are the formulae of famous physicians for which their clientele travel continents and pay them fabulous office fees. One of these is the ointment that you wish, given by a famous Parisian dermatologist to wealthy women when they come to him for a superfluous-hair remedy. Now, all physicians are agreed that depilatories leave the patient worse off than she was before. There is the electric needle; in expert hands and for slight growths it is the best remedy. The ointment advised by Professor Sabourand devitalizes the hair, so he states, and even if it does grow again, it is

colorless. Its action is exceedingly slow. Many women who use depilatories, like the one given below to Mrs. J. B. C., regret doing so afterward, when their use is followed by a denser growth of hair, as is often the case; not invariably, of course, but only experience will show how a depilatory, or the formula of Professor Sabourand for devitalizing the hair, will act in a given case. I will take pleasure in sending further data, as well as Professor Sabourand's formula, on receipt of a self-addressed, stamped envelope with your request.

MRS. J. B. C.—No, I am not mistaken. Your druggist has made the mistake. There is a *tincture* of turpentine. It differs from the oil of turpentine as any other tincture does. Unless for slight typographical errors that will creep into any printed matter, the formulae given here are substantially correct, and for the most part are culled from the best authorities on two continents. The one you take exception to is a depilatory, and I object to it on that score, but pharmaceutically it is absolutely accurate, and so I will repeat it:

Tincture of turpentine.....	50 minims
Oil of turpentine.....	100 minims
Castor oil.....	2 drams
Alcohol.....	5 drams
Collodion to make.....	4 ounces

In using, apply for several days; after which the film can be removed, bringing the hair with it without causing pain.

MAIZIE.—I am glad that you feel it possible to send an inquiry to this department. No, it is not unusual for a girl of your age to do this. A little miss of eleven sent me quite a congratulatory letter recently, telling me how much she enjoyed this department; and so they range in years to dear old ladies in "lavender and old lace." Rouge is neither necessary nor becoming to a child of your age. You may have a natural pallor, which is considered very attractive if the eyes are bright, the lips red, and the teeth white. Look well into your general health, and your complexion will look after itself.

Doctor Whitney will be glad to answer, free of charge, all reasonable questions relating to beauty and health. Private replies will be sent to those inclosing a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Do not send Canadian stamps or coins. Address: Beauty Department, SMITH'S MAGAZINE, 79 Seventh Avenue, New York.



# Any Weather Is Billiard Weather! And Any Home Has Room For a BRUNSWICK Table

Carom and Pocket Billiards are a captivating sport, and nowadays the Brunswick Home Table is the family playground. *When school lets out it quickens home-bound footsteps.*

Soon then the clicking balls proclaim that eager eyes are training to debate dad's mastery when he arrives from work.

This manly love of skillful achievement is built right into these scientific Brunswicks. They are packed full of health, they are wrapped with tense moments, and they're brimming over with raillery and laughter!

## Used by Experts

Many professionals use Brunswick Home Tables. Accurate angles, fast ever-level beds and quick-acting Monarch cushions give them expert playing qualities.

Fine oak and handsomely figured mahogany, richly inlaid and built to last a lifetime.

All reproduced in actual colors in our de luxe catalog. Write for free copy today.

## Low Prices—Free Trial

Test any Brunswick 30 days at home and *pay while you play*, if you keep the table. Prices are low because we are selling to thousands.

Balls, Cues, Expert Book of 33 games, etc., given free with each table.

## Mail This Coupon Today

Learn how our "Quick Demountables" can be set up anywhere and put in a closet when not in use. See the "Grand" and celebrated "Baby Grand."

Get full information and color-pictures of tables in our latest catalog—"Billiards—The Home Magnet." The coupon brings a copy free by return mail. Send today.

## BRUNSWICK HOME BILLIARD TABLES

The Brunswick-Balke-Collender Co.,  
Dept. 45 P, 623-633 S. Wabash Ave.,  
Chicago.

Without incurring any obligation I would like to receive a copy of your color-catalog

"Billiards—The Home Magnet"

Name .....

Address .....

## The Pleasure of an "Old Town Canoe"

Canoeing in an "Old Town" is real pleasure. It is so light, strong and glides over the water so smoothly. You need never worry about leaking or bucking. An "Old Town Canoe" is as safe as it is beautiful. Easy to paddle and manage. Our "Sponson" Canoes can't turn over. Write for illustrated catalog. 4000 canoes ready to ship. Quick delivery from dealer or factory. \$34 up.

**OLD TOWN CANOE CO.**  
643 Main St., Old Town, Maine, U. S. A.



## Mrs. Graham's HAIR RESTORER

**RESTORES GRAY HAIR**  
to its natural color  
in a few days  
**TRIAL BOTTLE 10¢**



Perfectly harmless — easily applied — will not stain the skin or scalp. Positively sure in its results. Makes the hair rich and glossy. Price 61. Write for **FREE Book, "Aids To Beauty."**

**MRS. GERVAISE GRAHAM**  
35 W. Lincoln Street, Chicago, Ill.

# CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING

## Agents and Help Wanted

**MEN OF IDEAS** and inventive ability. New list of "Needed Inventions," "Patent Buyers," and "How to Sell Your Patent and Your Money." Randolph & Co., Dept. 162, Wash., D.C.

**START A BUSINESS OF YOUR OWN.** Can be handled in spare time. Only small investment required. Send today for free booklet. Niagara, Box 718, Lockport, N. Y.

**AGENTS — SNAPPIEST HOUSEHOLD LINE** on earth. Red hot sellers, steady repeaters—100% profit. 250 light weight, fast selling, popular priced necessities. Agents outfit free. Get busy—quick—Write today; postal will do. American Products Co., 9442 3rd Street, Cincinnati, Ohio.

**BE AN AUTOMOBILE EXPERT IN SIX WEEKS.** Our big book tells you how. Rhea's Automobile School, 522 E. 11th Street, Kansas City, Mo.

**WE PAY \$80 Monthly Salary** and furnish rig and expenses to introduce guaranteed poultry and stock powders. Bigler Co., 2368 Springfield, Ill.

**GOVERNMENT positions** pay big money. Get prepared for "exams" by former U. S. Civil Service Examiner. Free booklet. Patterson Civil Service School, Box Y, Rochester, N. Y.

**Railroads want Traffic Inspectors;** 8-hour law creates big demand; Travel; promotion certain; big pay. Short hours. Free transportation over Continent. Ask for free Booklet H-18, Frontier Prep. School, Buffalo, N. Y.

## Motion Picture Plays

**WE accept scripts** in any form; correct Free; sell on Commission. Big Rewards! Make Money. Write us. Writer's Service, Box 14, Auburn, N. Y.

**WRITE Photoplays;** \$10—\$500 each paid. Experience unnecessary; details Free to beginners. Producers League, 356, St. Louis.

## Business Opportunities

**BUILD A \$5,000 BUSINESS** in two years. Let us start you in the collection business. No capital needed; big field. We teach secrets of collecting money; refer business to you. Write today for Free Pointers and new plan. American Collection Service, 19 State Street, Detroit, Mich.

## Song Poems

**SONG WRITERS "Key to Success"** Sent Free! We compose and facilitate free publication or outright sale. Submit Poems. Knickerbocker Studios, 108 Gaiety Bldg., New York

## Games & Entertainment

**PLAYS, Vaudeville Sketches, Monologues, Dialogues, Spoken, Minstrel Material, Jokes, Recitations, Tableaux, Drills, Entertainments, Make up goods.** Large catalog free. T. S. Denison & Co., Dept. 19, Chicago.

## Authors

**WANTED—Stories, articles, poems, etc.** We pay on acceptance. Offers submitted. Send Mss. to Cosmos Magazine, 1022 Washington, D. C.

## Patents and Lawyers

**PATENTS—Write for How To Obtain a Patent.** List of Patent Buyers and Inventions Wanted. \$1,000,000 in prizes offered for inventions. Send sketch for free opinion as to patentability. Our 4 books sent free upon request. Patents advertised free. We assist inventors to sell their inventions. Victor J. Evans & Co., Patent Attys., 767 Ninth, Washington, D. C.

**IDEAS WANTED—Manufacturers** are writing for patents procured through me. Three books with list hundreds of inventions wanted sent free. Help you market your invention. Advice free. R. B. Owen, 39 Owen Building, Washington, D. C.

**PATENTS THAT PROTECT AND PAY.** Advice and books free. Highest references. Best results. Promptness assured. Send sketch or model for search. Watson F. Coleman, Patent Lawyer, 624 F Street, Washington, D. C.

**INVENT Something.** It may bring wealth. Free book tells what to invent and how to obtain a patent through our Credit System. Waters & Co., Succeeded by Talbert & Parker, 4307 Warder Bldg., Washington, D. C.

**Patents Secured or Fee returned.** Actual search free. Send sketch. 1917 Edition, 90-page book free. G. P. Kimmel, 249 Barrister Bldg., Wash., D. C.

We make it possible to reach 2,150,000 readers at \$6.39 a line in the Classified Columns of Ainslee's, People's, Popular, Smith's, Picture-Play, Detective Story and Top-Notch Magazines. Write for particulars. Smith's Magazine, 79 Seventh Ave. New York City.

## DIAMONDS ON CREDIT

### BEAUTIFUL DIAMONDS SENT ON APPROVAL

NO MONEY DOWN. Order any diamond from our catalogue; we will send it, all charges paid. After you have made a thorough examination and are satisfied as to the quality and value, pay 20 per cent of the price and only 10 per cent per month thereafter. If not satisfactory, return it at our expense. Don't pay a cent until you are satisfied. Certificate furnished guaranteeing the quality of every diamond. Exchangeable at any time for any other article at an annual increase in value of 7 1/2 per cent MORE than you paid. Own a genuine Diamond. Send for our Catalog DeLuxe No. 18. It's free. L. W. SWEET & CO., Inc., 2 & 4 Maiden Lane, New York City

Please mention this magazine when answering advertisements

# DIAMONDS

ON CREDIT - \$  
TERMS AS LOW AS 250  
A MONTH

## Diamond Rings

Wonderfully brilliant Genuine Diamonds, any style solid gold mountings; also Diamond La Vallieres, Ear Screws, Brooches, Scarf Pins, Studs, etc., on credit terms as low as \$2.50 a month.

Send for Jewelry Catalog No. 57

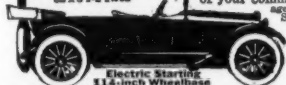
containing over 2,000 beautiful illustrations of Diamonds, Watches, Artistic Jewelry, Silverware, Cut Glass, etc. Select anything desired, either for personal wear, or for a gift to friend or loved one, then ask us to send the selection for your examination. It will be sent, all charges prepaid by us.

**YOU PAY NOTHING—NOT ONE CENT** until you see and examine the article right in your own hands. If you like it, pay one-fifth of the purchase price, and keep it; balance divided into eight equal amounts, payable monthly. If not entirely satisfactory, return at our expense. You assume no risk; you are under no obligation. Our Catalog tells all about our Easy Credit Plan. Send for it today. It is FREE.

**LOFTIS BROS. & CO., The National Credit Jewelers**  
Dept. L644, 100 to 108 N. State Street, Chicago, Illinois  
(Established 1858) Stores in: Chicago; Pittsburgh; St. Louis; Omaha

## Driver Agents Wanted

Five-Pass., 30 H.P.  
32 x 1-2 Tires



Electric Starting  
11.4-inch Wheelbase

Ride in a Bush Car. Pay for it out of your commissions on sales; my agents are making money. Shipments are prompt. Bush Cars guaranteed or money back.

Write at once for my 48-page catalog and all particulars. Address: J. H. Bush, Pres. Dept. 300

**BUSH MOTOR COMPANY, Bush Temple, Chicago, Ill.**

## GOV'T POSITIONS for WOMEN

Get My Money-Back Guarantee. You'll be independent for life, in a government position. Clerkships in Post-office, Gov't Departments, Customs and Internal Revenue, Stenographers and Typewriters. Many others. All under Civil Service—permanent places, dignified work, good pay, short hours, regular vacations. I prepare you for examination and appointment.

**Write today** Learn about these protected positions for women. Ask for "Book HC 1961" EARL HOPKINS, Washington, D. C.



## for that HACKING COUGH



Get quick relief from the irritating cough, soothe the throat, stop the tickling and help the bronchial tubes with

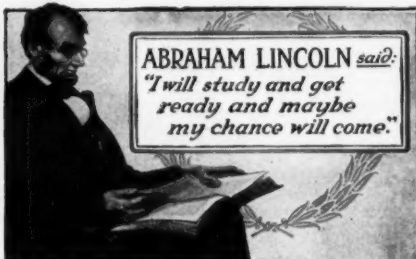
## BROWN'S BRONCHIAL TROCHES

—speedy, effective and harmless—contain no opiates. Handy to carry. Successfully used for over 60 years.

Regular Sizes, 25c, 50c, and \$1.

**New 10c Trial Size Box at your Druggist**

If your dealer cannot supply you, we John I. Brown & Son will mail any size, upon receipt of price. Boston, Mass.



ABRAHAM LINCOLN said:  
"I will study and get ready and maybe my chance will come."

## YOUR Chance Will Come

Born in a log cabin, Abraham Lincoln had little chance to acquire an education. But he was determined to succeed. "Some day," he said, "my chance will come." So he studied and got ready. And his chance *DID* come.

Your chance will come. Some day you'll be considered for promotion or for a good job in some other line of work. If you are ready, you'll go up.

And you *CAN* get ready. No matter if your schooling was limited—if you do have to work long hours. If you really want a better job, the International Correspondence Schools can train you for it at home during your spare time.

Every month hundreds of I. C. S. Students voluntarily report promotions or salary increases due to I. C. S. help. What the I. C. S. have done for these men they can do for *YOU*. Mark and mail the coupon NOW.

I. C. S., BOX 3464, Scranton, Pa.

## INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOLS

Box 3464, SCRANTON, PA.

Explain, without obligating me, how I can qualify for the position, or in the subject, before which I mark X.

- |                                                     |                                                    |
|-----------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> ELECTRICAL ENGINEER        | <input type="checkbox"/> SALESMANSHIP              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Electric Lighting          | <input type="checkbox"/> ADVERTISING MAN           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Electric Car Running       | <input type="checkbox"/> Window Trimmer            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Electric Wiring            | <input type="checkbox"/> Show Card Writer          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Telegraph Expert           | <input type="checkbox"/> RAILROAD                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> MECHANICAL ENGINEER        | <input type="checkbox"/> ILLUSTRATOR               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mechanical Draftsman       | <input type="checkbox"/> DESIGNER                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Machine Shop Practice      | <input type="checkbox"/> BOOKKEEPER                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gas Engineer               | <input type="checkbox"/> Stenographer and Typist   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CIVIL ENGINEER             | <input type="checkbox"/> Cert. Public Accountant   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Surveying and Mapping      | <input type="checkbox"/> Railway Accountant        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> WIRE FOREMAN OR ENGINEER   | <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial Law            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Metallurgist or Prospector | <input type="checkbox"/> GOOD ENGLISH              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> STATISTICAL ENGINEER       | <input type="checkbox"/> Teacher                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Marine Engineer            | <input type="checkbox"/> Common School Subjects    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECT                  | <input type="checkbox"/> CIVIL SERVICE             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Contractor and Builder     | <input type="checkbox"/> Railway Mail Clerk        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architectural Draftsman    | <input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Concrete Builder           | <input type="checkbox"/> Textile Overseer or Supt. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Structural Engineer        | <input type="checkbox"/> Navigator                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> PLUMBING AND HEATING       | <input type="checkbox"/> Pattern Making            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sheet Metal Worker         | <input type="checkbox"/> AUTOMOBILES               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CHEMICAL ENGINEER          | <input type="checkbox"/> Auto Repairing            |
|                                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Spanish                   |
|                                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> German                    |
|                                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> French                    |
|                                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Italian                   |

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Occupation \_\_\_\_\_  
& Employer \_\_\_\_\_  
Street \_\_\_\_\_  
and No. \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

If name of Course you want is not in this list, write it below.





# HOW do you know the blossom's on the clover? "Your Nose Knows"

It's the fragrance that appeals, the fresh, pure fragrance of early Spring. Fragrance is Nature's promise of delights to come. It's Nature's guarantee, too, of a thoroughly good tobacco. The tobacco with a wholly satisfying, pure fragrance is the tobacco for you. "Your nose knows."

No tobacco compares in pure fragrance with

## Tuxedo

The Perfect Tobacco for Pipe and Cigarette

It's the fragrance of Nature—the pure, sunny, "Blue Grass" fragrance of Old Kentucky, where Tuxedo's rich, Burley leaves are grown and cured and blended and—"Your nose knows."

Try this Test:—Rub a little Tuxedo briskly in the palm of your hand to bring out its full aroma. Then smell it deep—its delicious, pure fragrance will convince you. Try this test with any other tobacco and we will let Tuxedo stand or fall on your judgment—

"Your Nose Knows"

Guaranteed by  
The American Tobacco Co.







Engineer Whitcomb, his great engine, his famous watch  
Chicago and Los Angeles makes a "mils a minute" clip with a "Santa Fe Special" Watch in the cab. Whitcomb says: **BEST WATCH I EVER CARRIED.**

**21 JEWEL \$3.50 A MONTH**  
**"Santa Fe Special"**

The REAL triumph of watch manufacturing—SEE this watch FIRST. Sent without one Penny down.

**Write for FREE Watch Book Today**—shows newest watch case designs in 4-colors. READ the so-called SECRETS of watch making. READ how you can save from ONE-THIRD to ONE-HALF of your money —Buy "Direct," cut out the wholesale jeweler's profit.

**Buy The BEST RAILROAD Watch The Famous "Santa Fe Special"**

—the one watch "That's Guaranteed for Life," thin model, all sizes, adjusted to positions, adjusted to isochronism, adjusted to temperature, adjusted to the second.

**EASY PAYMENTS TO SUIT YOU**—Write today—your name on a postal brings the FREE watch book.  
**SANTA FE WATCH CO., Dept. 363 Topeka, Kan.**

**You Can Have Beautiful Eyebrows—Eyelashes**  
by applying "Lash-Brow-ine" nightly. It nourishes the eyebrows and lashes, making them long, thick and luxuriant, adding wonderfully to your beauty, charm and attractiveness. "Lash-Brow-ine" is a guaranteed pure and harmless preparation, used successfully by thousands. Send 25c (post) and we will mail you "Lash-Brow-ine" and beauty booklet prepaid in plain sealed cover. Beware of imitations.  
**MAYVELL LABORATORIES, 4006-78 Madison Avenue, CHICAGO**

**Delivered to you FREE**  
**THE RANGER**  
**30 DAYS FREE TRIAL**

**LATEST MOTORBIKE MODEL**  
**CHOICE OF 44 STYLES** Colors and Sizes in the famous line of "Ranger" Bicycles, shown in full color in our big new Catalog. There are eighty-three (83) others, also, shown at factory prices from \$14.75, \$15.75, \$17.75, up. There is a **Mead Bicycle** for every rider, at a price made possible only by our **Factory-Direct-to-Rider** sales plan.

**SEND NO MONEY** but write today for our big 1917 catalog of Bicycles, Tires and Sundries at prices so low they will astonish you. Also particulars of our great new offer to deliver you express prepaid a **Ranger Bicycle** on one month's free trial without a cent expense to you.

**BOYS** you can make money taking orders for bicycles, tires, lamps, sundries, etc., from our big handsome catalog. It's a free. It contains "combination offers" for refitting your old bicycle like new at very low cost. Also much useful bicycle information. Send for it. **LOW FACTORY PRICES** direct to you. No one else can offer such values and such terms. You cannot afford to buy a bicycle, tires or sundries without first learning what we can offer you. Write now.

**MEAD CYCLE CO., Dept. C-38 CHICAGO, ILLINOIS**

## Test Neolin Wear Prove Neolin Saving

What does it mean—the modern, perfect sole?

It means Neolin, the synthetic sole and that means—

—A last-long sole that wears and then wears when your leather soles have just been wearing out.

### Neolin Soles

—A sole that reduces the cost of shoe wear most for those that feel it most.

### Neolin Soles

—An all-weather sole—that's good in spring, good in winter, because it's waterproof and grip-ground too.

That's good in summer because it's light and flexible and good looking for all its durability.

### Neolin Soles

A sole that looks well and looks modern. A sole that holds its looks and the shape of the shoe it's worn on after much wetting and much hard work.

Neolin Soles for grown-ups and children. Neolin Soles in black, white, tan. Neolin Soles—the same on any price of shoe.

Avoid imitations, mark that mark; stamp it on your memory: Neolin—

the trade symbol for a never-changing quality product of The Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co., Akron, O.

**Neolin**  
Better than Leather

**The Charm of Youth**  
No woman likes to part  
with it—nor is it necessary.

## CARMEN Complexion POWDER

helps to retain  
this choicest of  
Time's fleeting  
gifts.

It adds to the  
skin a natural,  
flower-like  
glow that radiates  
Youth and  
Beauty.

White, Pink, Flesh, Cream  
Sole Everywhere  
STAFFORD-MILLER CO.,  
St. Louis, Mo.



## Learn Piano!

### This Interesting Free Book

Shows how you can become a skilled  
player of piano or organ in your own home,  
at one quarter usual cost. Dr. Quinn's

Famous Written Method is endorsed by leading musicians and heads of  
State Conservatories. Successful 25 years. Play chords at once and com-  
plete piece in every key, within 4 lessons. Scientific yet easy to un-  
derstand. Fully illustrated. For beginners or teachers, old or young. All music  
free. Diploma granted. Write today for full particulars. M. L. QUINN CONSERVATORY, BOX 650 AC, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

### COPY THIS SKETCH

and let me see what you can do with it. You can  
earn \$25.00 to \$125.00 or more per week, as illustra-  
tor or cartoonist. My practical system of personal  
individual lessons by mail will develop your talent.  
Fifteen years successful work for newspapers and  
magazines qualifies me to teach you.

Send me your sketch of President Wilson with 6c in  
stamps and I will send you a test lesson plate, also  
collection of drawings showing possibilities for YOU.

**THE LANDON SCHOOL** of Illustrating  
and Cartooning  
1444 Schofield Bldg., Cleveland, O.



## :: POCKET EDITIONS ::

USEFUL SUBJECTS 10c. EACH

Sheldon's Twentieth Century Letter Writer; Sheldon's  
Guide to Etiquette; Physical Health Culture; National  
Dream Book; Zingara Fortune Teller; The Key to  
Hypnotism; Heart Talks With the Lovelorn; Frank  
Merriwell's Book of Physical Development.

Street & Smith, Publishers, 79-89 Seventh Ave., New York

## YOU CAN HAVE THIS



wholly visible (42 key) single shift  
typewriter, for your own, if  
you will show it to your friends  
and let them see wherein it ex-  
ceeds other \$100 type-  
writers, and tell them of  
our most liberal offer ever  
made on a strictly modern  
typewriter and a Wood-  
stock at that. By post card  
or letter simply say, "Mail Particulars."

WOODSTOCK TYPEWRITER CO., Dept. F 875, CHICAGO, ILL.



BESSIE EYTON—Selig Star

**Writes:** "Crème Mignon is concentrated Roses  
and Sunshine—refreshing and efficient."

**WON'T** you give us the opportunity to prove to you why  
Crème Mignon—the Perfect Cold Cream—is recom-  
mended by the most beautiful women of the stage and  
screen—why Crème Mignon is the favorite cream of New  
York's Society Women?

**DON'T ENVY A BEAUTIFUL WOMAN**  
when a few minutes time at night with Crème Mignon  
will bring to your face the same rosy glow of youth  
and perfect health—the appealing freshness and charm to  
which every woman is entitled. Carelessness alone is re-  
sponsible for a sallow complexion, unsightly blotches and a  
tired, drawn face. It is easy to make your friends proud of  
you. Can you afford not to!

### OUR GUARANTEE

of satisfaction or money returned means this: To readers of  
Smith's Magazine who will remit 50c. in stamps or coin, we  
will send, prepaid, a large jar of Crème Mignon. If this  
cream does not refresh and improve your complexion better  
than any cream or lotion you have ever used, we will, upon  
receipt of the jar—whether full or empty—immediately  
return your fifty cents. We guarantee this to you and to  
the publishers of SMITH'S MAGAZINE.

CREME MIGNON CO., 540 W. 165th St., New York City

**SPECIAL OFFER** to readers of SMITH'S MAGAZINE. We will  
mail, on receipt of 50c., a beautiful Alum-  
inum Box, containing Crème Mignon and Crème Mignon  
Complexion Powder—enough for two or three weeks. Write to-  
day. This offer is presented at a great loss for a short time only  
to prove the wonderful value of the Mignon products. Large jar  
of Crème Mignon 50c. postpaid.




## Bud Cigarettes

Plain or Cork Tip. Made of Selected  
Pure Turkish Tobacco, with a dis-  
tinctive blend which is appreciated by  
smokers of discrimination and taste.  
50 Bud Cigarettes securely packed in  
Mahogany Wood Boxes, with Brass  
Hinges and Spring Catch. Send us  
\$1.00 for box of 50. Sent postpaid to  
any address. You'll be glad to smoke  
'em. The Bud Cigarette Company,  
2 Rector Street, New York City.

**When You Forget Your Umbrella Buy a Box of LUDEN'S**

Prevent "wet weather" discomforts. Relieve coughs, colds, throat trouble.

In "Yellow Box"—5c  
WM. H. LUDEN Reading, Pa.



**LUDEN'S**  
MENTHOL CANDY COUGH DROPS

Luden's Cough Drops were never intended solely for coughs and colds, but also as a help for offensive breath, disordered digestion, "smoker's throat," etc.

**Pay as You Wish**

We'll send you a genuine Lachnite for you to wear for 10 full days. If you can tell it from a real diamond send it back at our expense. Costs but 1-30th as much. If you decide to keep it pay only a few cents a month. Write for catalog.

**GENUINE LACHNITE GEMS**

Keep their dazzling fire forever. Set in solid gold. Cut by world renowned diamond cutters. Will stand fire and acid tests. All kinds of jewelry at corresponding low prices. Easy payments. **WRITE TODAY.**

CHANDLER & CHANDLER, Patent Attorneys  
H. Lachnite Co., 72 N. Michigan Av., Chicago, Dept. 1153



**Money In Your Ideas**

C & C PATENTS PROTECT THEM FOR YOU

Books "What to Invent" and "How to Obtain a Patent" sent free. Send rough sketch for free report regarding patentability. A C & C patent on your idea today may mean independence tomorrow. Manufacturers constantly writing us to buy patents. Patents advertised for sale at our expense.

**CHANDLER & CHANDLER, Patent Attorneys**  
Est. 21 Years. 1082 F Street, Washington, D.C.



**GET RID OF THAT FAT**

FREE TRIAL TREATMENT

Sent on request. Ask for my "pay-when-reduced" offer. My treatment has reduced at the rate of a pound a day. No dieting, no exercise, absolutely safe and sure method. Let me send you proof at my expense.

**DR. R. NEWMAN, Licensed Physician,**  
Slate New York, 286 Fifth Avenue, New York, Desk C-46



**A High School Course In Two Years**

Learn in your own home. Here is a thorough, complete, and simplified high school course that you can finish in two years. Meets all college entrance requirements. Prepared by leading members of the faculties of universities and academies.

Write for booklet. Send your name and address for our booklet and full particulars. No obligations whatever. Write today—now.

**American School of Correspondence, Dept. P1153, Chicago, U.S.A.**

**Velvet Grip**  
OBLONG RUBBER BUTTON

**HOSE SUPPORTER**

Mother—Save your stockings and those of your children by wearing Velvet Grip, the only make having the Oblong Rubber Button. This most important modern improvement in hose supporters has taken the place of the old-fashioned round button. Because of its shape and its larger holding surface for the stocking, it prevents tearing and drop stitches. The Oblong Rubber Button is a cushion of solid, live rubber grooved on either side where the highly nickeled clasp fastens over the stocking firmly—yet as gently as a thumb and finger hold.

The Velvet Grip line includes styles for women, infants, children and infants.

**GEORGE FOSTER COMPANY**  
Makers BOSTON

Also Makers of the Famous BOSTON GARTER for Men



Look for this clasp with the Hump Loop and the Oblong, All-Rubber Button

**PAINT SIGNS and SHOW CARDS**

Learn to paint. I teach you personally, by mail, in a short time. Oldest and largest School. Big field, work interesting. You can

**EARN \$18 TO \$45 A WEEK**

Prizes, Money, etc. "This job after school hours." "You can get \$10, profit \$7.05." "Crowfoot, B. C., says: 'Earned \$200.00 while taking course.'" "Get literature, samples, guarantees—all FREE."


**DETROIT SCHOOL OF LETTERING**  
Established 1899. 463 D. B. of L. Bldg. DETROIT, MICHIGAN



**BE A TRAVELING SALESMAN**

Hundreds of good positions now open. No experience required to get one of them. Write today for list of openings offering opportunities to earn Big Money while you learn and testimonials from hundreds of our students who are earning \$100 to \$500 a month. Address nearest office. Dept. 604

**NATIONAL SALESMEN'S TRAINING ASSOCIATION**  
Chicago, New York, San Francisco



**Don't Wear a Truss**

**BROOKS' APPLIANCE**, the modern scientific invention, the wonderful new discovery that relieves rupture will be sent on trial. No obnoxious springs or pads. Has automatic Air Cushions. Binds and draws the broken parts together as you would a broken limb. No salves. No lies. Durable, cheap. Sent on trial to prove it. Protected by U. S. patents. Catalogue and measure blanks mailed free. Send name and address today.

**C. E. BROOKS, 212 State Street, Marshall, Mich.**





# Tobacco Habit BANISHED in 48 to 72 Hours



## Immediate Results

Trying to quit the tobacco habit unaided is a losing fight against heavy odds, and means a serious shock to your nervous system. So don't try it! Make the tobacco habit quit you. It will quit you if you will just take Tobacco Redeemer according to directions.

It doesn't make a particle of difference whether you've been a user of tobacco for a single month or for 50 years, or how much you use, or in what form you use it. Whether you smoke cigars, cigarettes, pipe, chew plug or fine cut or use snuff Tobacco Redeemer will positively remove all craving for tobacco in any form in from 48 to 72 hours. Your tobacco craving will begin to decrease after the very first dose—there's no long waiting for results.

Tobacco Redeemer contains no habit-forming drugs of any kind and is the most marvelously quick, absolutely scientific and thoroughly reliable remedy for the tobacco habit.

## Not a Substitute

Tobacco Redeemer is in no sense a substitute for tobacco, but is a radical, efficient treatment. After finishing the treatment you have absolutely no desire to use tobacco again or to continue the use of the remedy. It quiets the nerves, and will make you feel better in every way. If you really want to quit the tobacco habit—get rid of it so completely that when you see others using it, it will not awaken the slightest desire in you—you should at once begin a course of Tobacco Redeemer treatment for the habit.

## Results Absolutely Guaranteed

A single trial will convince the most skeptical. Our legal, binding, money-back guarantee goes with each full treatment. If Tobacco Redeemer fails to banish the tobacco habit when taken according to the plain and easy directions, your money will be cheerfully refunded upon demand.

## Let Us Send You Convincing Proof

If you're a slave of the tobacco habit and want to find a sure, quick way of quitting "for keeps" you owe it to yourself and to your family to mail the coupon below or send your name and address on a postal and receive our free booklet on the deadly effect of tobacco on the human system, and positive proof that Tobacco Redeemer will quickly free you from the habit.

Newell Pharmacal Company  
Dept. 570, St. Louis, Mo.



**Mail Coupon NOW  
for FREE Booklet**

NEWELL PHARMACAL CO.,

Dept. 570, St. Louis, Mo.

Please send, without obligating me in any way, your free booklet regarding the tobacco habit and proof that Tobacco Redeemer will positively free me from the tobacco habit.

Name .....

Street and No. ....

Town ..... State .....

# The Gold Rod

By DANE COOLIDGE

Author of "Hidden Water," "Pecos Dalhart,"  
"Rimrock Jones," etc.



THE first installment of this striking and unusual story will appear in the next number of SMITH'S. It is a Western story without the conventional Hero, but it has a very distinct Heroine. It is quite unlike anything we have ever published. It will arouse your interest and curiosity, and may occasionally thrill you. As a fascinating, born storyteller its author is unique. We hope to hear from you about this story. It will run through four numbers of SMITH'S. You will not want to miss the first installment in the

## APRIL NUMBER

On the news stands March 5th

# FATIMA

*The  
Turkish Blend*



a sensible  
cigarette



